CHRISTS COMMVNION WITH HIS CHURCH MILITANT.

First preached, and now publiſhed for the good of Gods Church in generall.

BY
NICHOLAS LOCKYER,
Maſter of Arts.

Cant. 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is my Welbeloved unto me, hee ſhall lye all night betwixt my breaſts.*

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TO

The vertuous Lady Aunt,

SUSAN CECILL

Grace and peace be multiplyed

BY

IESUS CHRIST.

Madam:

THe sweet taste I have had of your Ladyships love to the best things, hath encouraged mee, humbly to present this little tract unto you. What Salomon *speaks from experience, that you upon trial have found true,* That the most promising contents of this life, are vanity and vexation of Spirit. *Our wise and mercifull Father doth usually thus imbitter the sweetest things of this world to us, that we may the*

more cordially relish, and fervently seek after that full satisfying, and everlasting sweetnesse and comfort, which is in Communion with Christ our heavenly Husband, in whom all fulnesse of consolation dwels. A drop of this transcendent fullnesse your Ladyship (I hope) shall find distilled into your soule, by reading this little work now come to your hands, which like Aqua Vitæ, shall cheere and revive your sad spirit, when ready to faint. Fainting persons, carrie little bottles of reviving liquids, alwayes about them; if your Ladyship shall think fit, to make this little tract your pocket-Companion, and peruse a little of it still, when you feele soule-qualmes to seize upon you; you shall find (I trust) through the blessing of Christ, much ease and comfort; and so spend and end your aged dayes, in more true solace of heart, than yet you have done your primest dayes of flourishing youth. The accomplishing of this, is the sincere and holy aime of your much obliged Nephew, in this his first offering

to

to publike view. Which ſimple aime, that the Lord may graciouſly anſwer to your Ladyſhips comfort here, and eternall happineſſe hereafter, I ſhall ſtill continue my prayer (though here I end my Epiſtle) that the Lord will ſtill attend this my poore endevour with his rich bleſſing to all the partakers thereof, and in ſpeciall to you.

Your much obliged Nephew,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

Christian Reader.

Communion with Christ, he is our happinesse in this world, and in the world to come: that which makes every sweet thing sweet, and every sweet thing sweeter. With this sweet subject is this little Tract now come to thy hand, taken up. Poore fallen man is still complaining of one want or other; and when the thing is given which hee longed for, yet his soule is as farre from content, as before; like to a childe that cryes for this and that, and yet when hee hath what he cryed for, continues crying still, and cannot tell wel what he would have. All our want is this, the want of Communion with Christ: this is the cause of all complaints; the infelicitie of the soul, the sum of mans misery, here and hereafter; but poore blind man sees it not, and therefore complaines of twenty things, twenty miles a this side his disease; and so spends his dayes in labour and sorrow, and yet looses

looſes happineſſe, both here and hereafter too. A full fruition of Chriſt, is full felicitie: a full fruition of any thing below Chriſt, without Chriſt, is but vanitie and vexation of ſpirit. The more then, O fallen man, thou canſt get into communion with thy God, the more will thy great loſſe be repaired, thy complaning ſoule ſatisfied, and thy tranquilitie ſetled upon thee againe. Hunt not then after riches, honours, pleaſures, and ſuch like low delights of the ſonnes of men, with this deluded miſtaken world, which lies in wickedneſſe; for felicitie is not in theſe: but ſtudy and ſtrive after a nearer communion with Chriſt: the next way to get moſt in with him, is the ſpeedie way unto all happineſſe: ſo much as thou canſt get of *his* company, ſo much art thou in heaven. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the ſumme of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee.* Pſal. 134. 17. 18.

This is heaven upon earth; and that true Nobilitie and Honour, which wee ſhould bee all ambitious after; to loſe our ſpirits in God. What an unſpeakable felicitie is it, to be ſtill with God in our thoughts

thoughts? This ennobles the ſpirit of man, and makes it a companion to the King of Kings: this gives eveneſſe and ſteadineſſe to a mans courſe; and makes him walk in all the wayes of God blameleſſe: this gives tranſcendant peace and tranquilitie to a mans ſpirit, and makes him unmoveable in the midſt of feares: this gives bread in famine; drinke, in drought, peace in warre; health in ſickneſſe; life in death. Devote thy ſelfe therefore to Chriſt, that hee may devote himſelfe to thee: and as a poore *medium* of communion, make uſe (if thou pleaſe) of this enſuing Treatiſe. if thou get any good, give glorie to God; and make the poore Pen-man, a conſtant ſharer in thy prayers.

Thine in Chriſt,

Theophilus Philantropus.

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FINIS.

CHRISTS COMMVNION With His Church Militant.

JOHN 14. verſ. 18.

I will not leave you comfortleſſe; I will come to you.

CHRIST and his Church are deare each to other: the truth of this is at large manifeſt in this Chapter. Chriſt as a heavenly Husband, being to leave his earthly Spouſe; to wit, his Church Militant, and to live with his Father at his right hand in glory, with His Church Triumphant; endevoureth with various verſes of this chapter, to Comfort the ſad ſpirit of his Beloved Spouſe, which hee perceived was much dejected. The verſe which I have choſen to inſiſt on, is one of them: *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.* In more words let me repeat this verſe againe. *Thou, O my Love, my Dove, my faire One, art ſad I ſee, and diſconſolate at my departure! As a Lilly in the valley; nay, as a Lilly*

Lilly (indeed) among thornes I ſhall leave thee: the Prince of darkneſſe dwelling in the children of darkneſſe, will endevour to devoure thee; Sons of Belial will beſet thee, perſecute and torment thee, as they have done me before thee: but be not at this diſmayed, O faireſt of women! dejected, as one without all conſolation: for I will not leave thee comfortleſſe, I will come to thee.

What difference is there between a priſon-houſe and mine owne houſe, if ſweet friends continually come to me there? 'Tis a priſon and no better wee abide in, whilſt we dwell in the body: fetter'd wee are with many luſts, and grone wee do, under the tyranny and oppreſſion of a body of death; and O! wretched men that we are, dwelling in theſe dungeons of clay, if no friend from Heaven come to us? 'Tis true, O my Spouſe, what thou ſayeſt; and therefore that thy dwelling in the body may not be comfortleſſe, I will come to thee. *I will not leave thee comfortleſſe, I will come, &c.*

The body is a priſon to the ſoule, and the world is a hell to both. The God of this world is a Devill, and the children of this world Devils, to the Spouſe of Chriſt. The father torments her ſpirit; and the children torment her fleſh: neither in body nor ſoule, whileſt in this world, can the Spouſe of Chriſt be quiet. Wee that are thus in hell upon earth, ſhall quickly be comfortleſſe, if no friend from Heaven come to us. True, oh my Spouſe: but to prevent this, *I will come to thee.* From Heaven to Earth (indeed) is a long journey; but yet this I'le not ſtand on; rather than thou ſhalt be left comfortleſſe, in any condition upon earth, I will from Heaven come to thee. Let it be what weather 'twill, and

and be at mid-night thou need's me, I will come to thee; *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

Affliction hath made many friends upon earth forsake me, O my Saviour! wilt not thou my heavenly friend so serve me? What if the Divell cast me into prison? wilt thou come to me there? wilt thou visit me when I lye in a nasty roome amongst nasty wretches, that curse and sweare, which thou canst not endure to heare? Yea, ô fairest of women! rather than thou shalt be comfortlesse in such a condition; *I will come to thee.*

Thou wilt come to mee ô my Saviour one day; but what if the Devill keep mee in such a prison *ten dayes?* a long time? till the *iron enter into my soule?* wilt thou not wax weary at last, and leave comming to me? No my Love, I am resolved to the contrarie. [*I will not*] *leave thee comfortlesse* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

Why, but what if Satan winnow me as wheat, and cast me into sin, which is more odious to thee than any prison, than any place, or any thing: wilt thou not then shake mee off for ever, and never come to me more? This, ô fairest of women! may make me cease comming to thee *for a moment*; but no longer: for I am resolved not to [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse* in any condition either of sin or punishment. *I will not* [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

My Text, you see, is Christs conjugall promise to his Spouse, of all kindnesse, during the time of his personall absence. The matter of this promise is consolatorie; the forme according to which our Saviour expresseth this consolatorie language; is first

first negative; *I will not leave you comfortlesse.* Secondly, affirmative; *I will come to you.* These latter words containe the reason of what is delivered in the former. We cannot be comfortlesse; [*because*] Christ still comes to us. And thus taking the words; you may read them thus, *viz. I will not leave you comfortlesse,* [for] *I will come to you.* No condition can be comfortlesse, if Christ come to us.

I will not leave you comfortlesse,] οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς, *I will not leave you fatherlesse and motherlesse. I will not leave you Orphans,* saith the Originall, ἀποφανίζομαι, the word comes from, that is here translated *comfortlesse,* which signifies, to bee made fatherlesse and motherlesse; which because it is usually a condition very comfortlesse, therefore is the word thus rendred, ὀρφανούς, *comfortlesse.* Thus the children of Christ shall not be left. They are no *Orphans,* which have Christ for their Father. They are never totally bereft of all comfort, to whom Christ comes: and thus hee will still doe to his Church Militant. Christ will never leave comming from Heaven to earth, although it be a very long journey, as long as he hath any one child upon earth. *I will not leave you comfortlesse.*

I will come to you,] ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, I returne to you, saith the Originall; spoken in the Present Tense, and not in the Future, [*I will*] *returne to you,* as we have it translated. *Ac si diceret Christus* (saith one) *se licet nondum profectum, jam esse in reditu*; As if Christ had said, although I am not yet gone from you, yet am I returning to you. Christ though not actually in person departed, yet was ready in spirit to be present with his Spouse to the end of the world.

Thus

Thus hauing paraphraſtically gone over theſe words, I will put the plaine meaning of them into this *Theſis* in Divinitie, *That the Church of Chriſt Militant ſhall not be left comfortleſſe, becauſe Chriſt will come to her.* Or thus, *no child of Chriſt upon earth, ſhall be left comfortleſſe, for Chriſt will come to him.* What Chriſt ſpake at his departure to his Diſciples, was not for them only, but for the comfort of all his people, to the end of the world. In his Diſciples he ſpake thus to all his children, that are or ever ſhall be upon the face of the earth, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

This comfortable doctrine, that I may fully and methodically handle, I will lay open unto you theſe foure things: Firſt, that Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Secondly, how Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Thirdly, when Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Laſtly, why Chriſt will take ſo much paines, as to come to his children on earth? I begin with the firſt of theſe, to wit, that Chriſt doth come to his Church and children upon earth. The truth of this is evident by our Saviours owne language, and by each godly mans experience.

Our Saviour, not only in my Text, but in many other places promiſed to come to his Church Militant, and therefore ſurely he doth come to his people on earth: for Chriſt is God, *and God cannot lye, nor repent.* What Chriſt hath ſaid he will doe, that he will faithfully performe to a tittle: *for faithfull is he that hath promiſed*, ſaith the Apoſtle. *Go therefore and teach all Nations, &c. teaching them to obſerve all things, whatſoever I have commanded you; and loe I am with you alwayes, even to the end of the*

world, Amen. Matth.28.19,20. This place shewes plainly, that Christ doth come to his children upon earth; and that he will doe this to the end of the world. For Ministers (of all men) to walk faithfully in their places, teaching their flock to *observe* [*all*] *things that Christ hath given them in charge*; will cost them hot water: especially living in corrupt places. This our Saviour tenderly considered: and therefore that his Disciples might not be disheartened; hee assures them of his company unto the last, to support and comfort them. *Loe I am with you to the end of the world.* Christ by this phrase of speech doth hint us, that what hee thus spake; should reach further than unto those to whom then he appeared: namely, to all Ministers and people *to the end of the world*, that shall faithfully discharge their places and callings to his honour.

I might here tell you, that not onely Christs word; but also Christs name sets forth the truth of this, that Christ is with his Church Militant, and so consequently, that he doth come to her. He was called *Emanuel*, which being interpreted, *Is God with us*, Mat.1.23. Which name was not only to note Christ; as then corporally present with his Church: but to note Christ as one having actually assumed our nature, and so to be more gloriously present with his Church to the end of the world, than ever from the beginning after *Adams* fall. Now as she said of her husband, *as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him:* so may the Spouse speake of her Husband Christ; as his name is, so is he. *Emanuel* is his name, which signifies *God with us*, and so indeed is Christ. He is continually with us. What *David* said of himselfe,

in

in respect of Christ; that may we truly say of Christ, in respect of us. *Nevertheless* (saith he) *I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand.* Though Christ dwell in Heaven, and we on earth; yet nevertheless he is continually comming to us, and abiding with us.

The godly have, and do find the truth of this by blessed experience, which is the second thing; and that which I rather insist on, for the confirmation of the truth in hand: because against experience there is no disputation. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ comes to his children upon earth, that their condition may not bee comfortlesse. *Herod* cast *Peter* into prison, and thought to have made him comfortlesse; but Christ came to him, as you may see. *And behold* (saith the Text) *the Angell of the* LORD *came upon him, and a Light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly, and his chaines fell off from his hand.* The Jewes by a storme of stones thought to have made *Steven* comfortlesse, but Christs comming to him prevented it. Christ so gloriously came to him in that deadly storme, that hee found more comfort (I beleeve) than ever he did before in his life: for *hee looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glorie of God, and Iesus standing at the right hand of God*: hee saw the Heavens opened ready to receive him, which transcendently revived him: which glorious vision he could never have seen, had not Christ come to him. *Paul* likewise found the truth of this point, when hee had left *Athens*, and came to preach to the *Gentiles* at *Corinth*. He was very fearfull, what successe hee should find in his Ministerie, amongst

the barbarous *Gentiles*. Now our tender Saviour, that *Paul* might not be overborne with feare, and made heartlesse and comfortlesse, graciously comes to him in a vision, as you may read. *Then spake the Lord to Paul by night in a vision, Be not afraid, but speake, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee; and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this Citie.* Thus at another time Christ came to *Paul*, that he might not be left comfortlesse, when hee was pleading his cause before *Ananias*, and like to be pull'd in peeces. *And the night following* (saith the Text) *the Lord stood by him, and said; be of good cheere Paul for as thou hast testified of me in Ierusalem, so must thou also beare witnesse at Rome.* At another time, Act. 23. 11. *Paul* and *Silas* together had experience of this truth, that Christ comes to his Church Militant. As they were powring out their souls together in prayer, Christ wonderfully came to them: he came in an Earthquake, and made the *foundations of the prison shake*, and so *opened all the prison doors, and loosed every prisoners bonds.* Comfortable was Christs comming to *Paul* and *Silas*, but terrible to the Gaoler; for hee seeing in what manner Christ broke in and rescued his servant, would have killed himselfe; but Christ came graciously to his soule also, and rescued it out of the hands of the Devill. Happy was it for this man, that Christ did finish two works in one journey; to wit, come to *Paul* and *Silas*, and deliver their bodies out of prison, and withall come to their Gaoler, and deliver his soule out of prison too. In an Earthquake Christ came both to Prisoners and Gaoler: for the Gaoler came *trembling* to the Prisoners of hope,

hope, as a man in despaire; *and fell downe*, saith the Text. *before Paul and Silas.* 'Tis no matter how Christ come to us, so hee comfort us before he leave us. Thus I have shewed to you, that CHRIST doth come to his Church Militant.

The second thing that I am to shew you, for the opening of the point; is, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant. To this I will answer, First, more generally, and briefly: Secondly, more particularly and fully. More generally and briefly. I answer thus: Christ visits his Church Militant; as *David* visited and comforted *Hanun*, to wit, mediately by his spirit, as *David* did mediately by his servants. *And I will pray the Father, and hee shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the* [*Spirit of truth,*] *&c.* Ioh. 14. 16. 17. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ by his Spirit comes now to his Church Militant. *While Peter thought on the vision,* [*the Spirit*] *said unto him, behold three men seek thee.*

But in the second place, that I may more particularly and fully answer to this question; to wit, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions; I will lay before you the generall conditions of mankinde: and shew you how Christ by his Spirit, as a Comforter, comes to us in them. The generall conditions of mankinde are two, *prosperitie* and *adversitie.*

Prosperity would soone bring the soules of Gods people to a comfortlesse condition, did not Christ by his Spirit come to them. Satan, that evill spirit is so busie, comming to the children of God,

when in prosperity, that did not Christ also come to them by his Almighty Spirit to quench all his fiery darts; their soules would soon be comfortlesse, the Lord knowes. When *Peter* was warme in the High Priests Hall, then the devill by a damsell came to him, and so farre hee prevail'd on him; that had not Christ lookt back upon him, and by his Spirit come to him; he had beene in a comfortlesse condition indeed. And thus would the condition of good men now be, which are warme in their nests with outward things, did not Christ come to them; when the sons of God be honourable, and great amongst the sonnes of men, as *David* and *Solomon*, *Iob*, *Iacob*, and *Abraham* were; then the devill in point of policy, though not out of love, visits them often; and by often comming to them then; drawes their precious soules into many sinnes, as pride, ambition, malice, sensualty, and the like; which like Cankers, quickly fret and eat out all divine consolation in the soule, and leave it like the Prodigall, feeding upon huskes; solacing it selfe with no other joy and content, then what the bare creature dipt in sinne will afford the sense; which, you must needs say, is of all comfortlesse conditions, the most and worst comfortlesse. Now that these may not be left in this comfortlesse state, to perish eternally, Christ by his Spirit thus comes to them. First in a sweet still voice behinde them, as the Prophet speaks, saying, sometimes in the midst of their sensualtie; this is not the way to eternall ioy: no, this is the way, O sensuall soule, walke in it.

This still voice strikes a damp in the merry sensuall soule of a Christian, and makes his heart in the

the midſt of vaine laughter, ſad. If this be not prevalent enough to turn him, but on againe he will in his ſinfull way; then Chriſt comes with a witneſſe, in thundring and lightning, to convince and ſting the conſcience, as hee did to the Iſraelites to bring them to ſee their wickedneſſe in chuſing a King, untill God thunder'd and lighten'd from heaven fearefully, they laid not to heart their rejecting God as their King, but went on ſtrongly and unaffectedly in their way. And juſt thus oftimes it is, with many of the ſonnes of God in proſperity: the ſtill voice of Chriſt ſweetly ſuggeſting, and mildely checking for ſinne, is not ſtrong enough to ſtop and turne them; untill the Angel of the Covenant come downe into the conſcience, and ſtand with a flaming Sword, threatning nothing but Hell and Death, if they make on a ſtep further, they ſtop nor turne not; which though not Chriſts naturall carriage to his children, yet he will in tender love deny himſelfe thus farre, as to put on an affrightning Vizzard upon his ſmiling countenance, and come terribly, and ſave violently, by plucking his children out of the fire, rather then hee will leave any of his ſo comfortleſſe, as to periſh remedileſſe. Chriſt will ſpeak out and ſpeak plaine, as hee did to *David* by *Nathan*, when a ſtill voice, and ſecret ſilent hints and becks will not do, He will come and lay his mouth to a mans eare and cry aloud, when he perceives that the pleaſure or profit of ſinne hath made him very deafe: hee will never leave crying and calling, ſtriking and knocking, till he hath made the deafe ſoule heare, and humble himſelfe with *Peter* and *David*, and then he puls off the terrible

terrible Vizzard from his countenance, and lookes upon the mourning penitent, with a countenance like *Lebanon*, and his lips drop ſweet ſmelling myrrh, into his broken ſpirit: and ſo is not left comfortleſſe, according to Chriſts promiſe, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

But ſuppoſe Satan ſhould not bee buſie, comming to the ſonnes of God in proſperitie; yet would worldly proſperity be a comfortleſſe condition, ſhould not Chriſt by his Spirit come to them. Riches and honours, together with all other delights of the ſonnes of men; they are as the white of an Egge, things without ſavour, unleſſe Chriſt come along with them to us: they tire and weary, pricke, diſtract and vex a man: they rob him of his ſleepe, and many times of his wits, nay of his precious life: they drowne mens ſoules in pride, voluptuouſneſſe, ſecuritie, and ſo ſet them in the next way to hell. This ſnare waits at every ungodly mans table, which makes proſperity to him comfortleſſe. This ſnare, that it may not catch the godly; Chriſt comes to them by his Spirit, and ſanctifies proſperitie by them: *Hee teaches them how to abound*; that is, how ſo to uſe the creature, as to enjoy ſervice and comfort from it: and to bring honour and glory by it.

The creature is emptie of what it promiſeth; and entiſing with what it hath: and this makes proſperitie to every carnall man, a comfortleſſe condition. Now to take off both theſe; Chriſt comes to his children which enjoy the creature, plenteouſly: he comes in the creature, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it: that is, by his bleſſing he makes it ſatisfiable and contentfull to the enjoyer, which it is not of it ſelfe:

ſelfe: this is the peculiar gaine that attends the godly: Chriſt comes in the creature to them, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it, and puts ſuch a ſupernaturall vertue and ſweetneſſe in it; that *they are therewith contented.* And as Chriſt comes [*in*] the creature to cure the emptineſſe of it, ſo hee comes [*with*] the creature, to cure the entiſing of it. Hee doth by the creature leade the ſoules of his children to the Creatour: by the ſweet of the one, hee lifts up their ſoules to heaven, to admire the ſweetneſſe of the other: ſo that, that which others are entiſed and beſotted with, and reſt in, that they take wing from to flee to heaven, whence comes every good and perfect gift, which is that indeed that makes proſperitie a comfortable condition; which otherwiſe is comfortleſſe enough, the Lord knowes.

Secondly, adverſitie would be a comfortleſſe condition to the godly, if Chriſt by his Spirit did not come to them: This I ſuppoſe none will deny; *For no affliction in it ſelfe is comfortable or joyfull,* but comfortleſſe, if Chriſt by his Spirit doe not come to us. Corporall affliction is a comfortleſſe condition, unleſſe Chriſt come to us, and be our Phyſitian. Spirituall affliction is a more comfortleſſe condition, if Chriſt doe not come to us.

Here theſe two queſtions are neceſſary to be anſwered: firſt, how doth Chriſt come to us in corporall affliction? Secondly, how doth Chriſt come to us in ſpirituall affliction?

To theſe queſtions both together, I thus anſwer: Chriſt the Phyſitian of ſoule and body, comes to both with comfort in one way; and that is by helping the ſoule to apply the promiſes of God, which are ſutable to his diſtreſſe. If a child of God

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be sad and sorrowfull, because of corporall affliction, Christ comes to him by his Spirit, with this comfortable language, *I am all-sufficient*. Christ by his Spirit, spreads abroad this Cardinall promise before the sad soule, and shewes him what a depth of mercy is folded up in it. There is a sufficiencie of wisedome in me, to find out wayes and meanes to deliver thee, though never so low brought. There is likewise a sufficiencie of power, to prosecute right meanes to accomplish their right end. Nay, there is a sufficiencie in me, to worke about good for thee, O sad soule, without meanes.

There's a sufficiencie of affection and will, to declare power and wisedome, with every attribute else, for thy good. If for all this application and amplification of a generall promise, the soule still droope under some corporall calamitie; Christ doth then in such a soule, as *Iacobs* sons and daughters did for him, *They rose up* (saith the Text) *and comforted him*: Gen. 37. 35. So Christ by his Spirit, after a lively manner indeed, rises up in such a soule to comfort him: and now hee leades this mourning Christian to some particular promise; that is, such a promise as speakes not of deliverance in generall, but of deliverance in particular, out of this or that kind of distresse, which he groanes under. As to give you an instance; suppose a Christian be sad and take thought, as Christ saith, *What he shall eat, and what he shall drinke, and wherewithall he shall be clothed*: then the Comforter comes with this particular promise, which speakes of deliverance out of this particular distresse. *First, seeke the Kingdome of God and his righteousnesse; and all these things shall be added unto you: take therefore no thought*

thought for to morrow, for to morrrw ſhall take thought for the things of it ſelfe. Mat.6.33,34. If yet for all this, the ſpirit of a Chriſtian ſtill complaine, as one fearing he ſhall want daily bread for him and his; then the Comforter comes, and perſwades the ſoule to reſt quietly upon the promiſe of God. He ſpeakes now to the complaining Chriſtian, as the Levites father in law did to him, *Comfort thy ſelfe, I pray thee, with a morſell of bread,* Judges 19. Comfort thy ſelfe, O mourning ſoule! I pray thee, with this particular promiſe, which is but a morſell of that bread, which came down from heaven, one of the leaſt favours that Chriſt hath procured for thee, to wit, a right and intereſt in the creature: with this perſwaſive language, doth Chriſt follow the complaining ſoule. untill he hath perſwaded him, to owne his owne mercy? and ſo he keepes his children in povertie, from being comfortleſſe.

As Chriſt in corporall afflictions comes to his children, and keepes them from being comfortleſſe; ſo likewiſe he comes to them in ſpirituall afflictions, that they may not be left comfortleſſe. If a childe of God be ſad and ſorrowfull, becauſe of this or that ſtrong temptation; the Comforter then comes to him with this ſweet language: *My grace is ſufficient for thee.* Thou prayeſt, and Satan tempts thee; thou doeſt faſt and pray, and yet Satan and thy luſt are more violent upon thee; thou doeſt all this with bitter teares, and Satan is the more bitterly bent againſt thee; and thou art foil'd every moment. By this O winnowed ſoule! Chriſt would ſhew thee, that thou wilt be comfortleſſe, in the midſt of all thy ſore ſoule-labour, unleſſe hee come

come to thee. *This same shall comfort us, concerning the worke and toile of our hands,* said *Lamech* of *Noah:* so may we say of Christ; this same must comfort us, concerning the labour and toile of our soules with any temptation: or else wee shall be comfortlesse, though we labour never so much. And this Christ doth and will doe, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of Satans prevailing upon him by temptation; that we may not be comfortlesse in this condition, Christ by his Spirit comes to him, and shewes him the fountaine of his blood, how deepe it is, and how free it is. How deepe it is, that it will drowne all sinne; Sins after conversion, as well as before: sinnes often repeated, as well as sinnes onely committed. And then he shewes the wounded soule, how free this fountaine is, for *any that hunger and thirst for it, for any that are weary and heavy laden,* 1 John 1.7. and desire to be eased by it; and so by degrees drawes the wounded soule, to wash his wounds in it by faith, and so Christ heales and comforts him. As the brethren of *Ephraim* comforted him, when he mourned because the men of *Gath* had slain his son, 1 *Chro.*7.22. So Christ comes to us, and comforts us, when the devill by his temptations hath almost slaine our soules, hee like the good Samaritan, powres in oile & wine into our wounds, and cures us. Though Satan passe by, and his limmes passe by, and leave us comfortlesse in the day of wounds and bleeding, yet Christ cannot, so full of bowels is he, nor will not, *I will not leave you comfortlesse &c.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of often and

and frequent relapſes, after promiſes and purpoſes to doe better; If this Chriſtian in the anguiſh of his ſpirit ſpeak to every godly friend, as the Prophet did to his, *Therefore ſaid I, looke away from me, I will weepe bitterly, labour not to comfort me, becauſe of the ſpoyling of the daughter of my people*; Iſai. 22. 4. Looke away from mee, O ye my Chriſtian friends! yea, and you, my faithfull Miniſter; for I will weeepe bitterly, labour not to comfort me, becauſe of the ſpoyling of my ſoule, by ſo often ſinning againſt vowes and promiſes, favours and bleſſings: Chriſt comes to this ſoule, and will not leave him comfortleſſe in this condition, (though it be indeed a very deſperate condition.) The Comforter uſually takes this courſe, with this comfortleſſe ſoule, to powre in ſome oyle into his deepe wounds: he reaſoneth with him from the mercy of man, to the mercy of God; from a drop, to the Ocean; and it may be faſtens upon his owne language once delivered to *Peter*. *Peter came to our Saviour and ſaid, Lord, how oft ſhall my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven times? Ieſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee untill ſeven times, but untill ſeventy times ſeven.* Matthew 18. 21, 22. From this ſpeech, the Comforter thus reaſoneth, with this ſad and ſore wounded ſoule, *viz.* If Chriſt would have *Peter*; a ſinfull man: ſhew ſo much mercy to one, ſo often offending him; ſurely Chriſt, a holy God, and infinite in love, is ready to ſhew much more compaſſion Himſelfe, to thoſe that are penitent, though they have ſinned times without number againſt him. Thus the Comforter leades this deſperate Chriſtian, as a weake wounded man by the hand; from the mercy of man,

man, to the mercy of God: and enables him this way, after some space of time, to take in comfort: for Christ is resolved, he will not leave this Christian comfortlesse. Christ will never leave comming to this comfortlesse soule, with this speech of his to *Peter*, and others of like nature (as Christ is well furnisht for a comforter) untill he hath brought him to drink willingly (for Christ forceth no Physick upon any Patient) of the cup of consolation more or lesse; and the longer sick-soules turne away their heads from this cup; the more (many times) he perswades them to drink at last.

If Christ *tentandi gratia*, for trialls sake, hide himselfe from a Christian, and so set him a mourning; I shall shew you by and by, how he comes to him. This is a condition (though of all deserted conditions the best) which will make a Christian heart comfortlesse indeed. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* Psal. 30. 7. Gods hiding his face, though but for trialls sake; will so trouble a Christian, that he will quickly be a burthen to himselfe, *and feare round about*, as 'tis said of *Pashur*. 'Twil make him weary of the night, and weary of the day; weary of his owne house, and weary of Gods house; weary of mirth, and account it madnesse; weary of riches, honours, yea life it self. and wish for death. *O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would please God to destroy me, that hee would let his hand loose and cut me off; then should I yet have comfort*: then should I see the face of God, which I long like *Moses* to see; then would he lift up the light of his loving countenance, and cause his face to shine glo-

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riouſly upon mee, whereas now I walke in the valley, and ſhadow of death; darke dayes are all that goe over my head; the glorious Sonne of righteouſneſſe ſhines not upon my ſoule, from morning to night. To this ſad ſoule thus be moaning himſelfe for want of his beloved, Chriſt his well beloved thus comfortably comes. *There hath no temptation taken hold on thee yet, O mourning ſoule! but that which is common to man: and be aſſured of this; that God is faithfull by whom thou art tempted, and will not try thee above that which thou art able: but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that thou mai'ſt be able to beare it.* 1.Cor.12.15. For a moment, O faireſt of Women, I ſaw juſt cauſe to hide my face from thee, to try the truth of thy love to me: but know; that with everlaſting kindneſſe will I have mercy on thee. Thy dulneſſe alſo in my ſervice, and thy low-prizing my company, did ſomething trouble mee; but know, *that the mountaines ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindneſſe ſhall never depart from thee: for this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me; as I have ſworne that the waters of* Noah *ſhould no more go over the earth; ſo have I ſworne that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. O thou afflicted, and toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted; behold I will lay thy ſtones with faire colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs, and I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleaſant Saphirs.* Iſai.45.8.9. Out of this ſweet language of the Prophet to the naturall branch; the Comforter will fetch ſuch precious water of life, to revive his deſerted ſoule: with theſe kiſſes of his lips will

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hee ſo comfort him; that he ſhall be conſtrained to ſay with David; *Thou, which haſt ſhewed mee great troubles, haſt quickned mee againe, and haſt brought mee up againe from the depths of the earth; thou haſt increaſed my joy, and comforted me on every ſide.* Pſal. 71. 6. I could hitherto, O my God! ſee thy back-parts; ſome ſad attributes of power and juſtice, which did terrifie my ſoule to looke on; but lo, now I ſee thy glory, thou haſt cauſed it gloriouſly to paſſe by mee: nay, to ſhine upon mee: I ſee thy face like Lebanon, comely as the Cedars; and herewith is my longing ſoule ſatisfied, as with marrow and fatneſſe. *This is my comfort, in mine, affliction; for thy Spirit, O Christ! by thy word hath revived me.* So that this Soul; though very ſorrowfull; yet is not left comfortleſſe neither. Thus I have anſwered the ſecond *Quære*, to wit, how Chriſt comes to us.

The third thing that I am to ſhew you; is When Chriſt comes to us. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.* But when, O my Saviour, wilt thou come to us? To this I anſwer firſt more generally; then more particularly, and determinately. More generally and briefly, I anſwer thus, Chriſt is already come, and is preſent with his Church Militant and will be to the end of the world, as hath been already proved. *I am come into my garden, my Siſter, my Spouſe, I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice; I have eaten my honey combe with my honey: I have drunke my wine with my milk,* Cant. 5. 1. Chriſt wee ſee by this ſweet language, is come, and is with us already. *I am come, &c.*

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But when will he come to mee in particular, as a Comforter? This is the queſtion. To this I anſwer firſt negatively, then poſitively. Negatively I anſwer thus: *viz.* Chriſt doth not come to us in this valley of teares, as *Aron* was cõmanded to come into the holy place; *Let him not come at all times*, ſaith the Lord *leſt he die*. Lev. 16. 2. If Chriſt ſhould not come to us at all times of our diſtreſſe; wee ſhould die under our burthen, ſo comfortleſs would be our condition, When my body is afflicted, I ſhall be comfortleſſe, If Chriſt do not come to me. When my ſoule is afflicted, I ſhall be more comfortleſs, if Chriſt do not graciouſly come to me. When my head akes, teeth akes, back akes, or belly akes: yea, when my leaſt finger, or joynt in my body akes, I ſhall be comfortleſſe, unleſſe Chriſt come to mee, ſo dolorous and comfortleſſe a Creature is man.

Wherefore as a poſitive anſwer, to the queſtion ere-while propoſed, know, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant, at all times: as long as his people live in this valley of teares, and are in any diſtreſſe of ſoule or body. Hee comes to them in proſperity, to ſweeten that, or elſe there would be but a little comfort and ſweetneſſe in it: but hee comes to them in all adverſity, after a more ſpeciall manner to ſweeten that, being of it ſelfe very bitter; bitterneſſe in the abſtract: my meaning is, altogether bitter, without the leaſt ſweetneſſe or pleaſure in it, to ſoule or body: for no affliction is in the leaſt manner or meaſure joyous, but as Chriſt, by his kind comming to us then, makes it ſo.

But here I ſhall bee thus queſtioned *viz.* If Chriſt as a Comforter comes to his Church Militant in every diſtreſſe of ſoule and body; how is

it that many of Gods childten, in corporall and ſpirituall afflictions, utter comfortleſſe and hopeleſſe language, as thoſe that finde no Comforter come to them? *Is thy mercy cleane gone, and haſt thou forgotten te be gracious?* (ſaith *David*) *haſt thou ſhut up thy loving kindneſſe in diſpleaſure? and wilt thou not be no more intreated, &c.* Many ſuch like ſad and dolorous complaints are ſtill uttered by ſome of Gods deare children: now if Chriſt as a Comforter come to His in every diſtreſſe; why is it thus with thele?

To this I will give anſwer firſt more indirectly thus. Poſſibly that ſoule which thus complaines; cannot but confeſſe, that Chriſt hath come and tendr'd comfort to him; though he through anguiſh and unbeleife refus'd it. Now if our ſoule-Phyſitian come from heaven to us, and bring cordials for us and wee will not take them, but caſt them behinde our backs; ſhall our Phyſitian bee blamed for unfaithfullneſſe and negligence towards his Patients, as one that did not viſit them?

Againe, poſſibly too, this Soule which thus complaines, muſt confeſſe that Chriſt came to him at the very beginning of his untractablenes towards God, and told him that this would quickly bring him into a comfortleſſe condition, if not timely lookt unto; and bid him againe, and againe, by a ſweet ſtill voice behinde him, to bee more pliable to God, as he tendred his favour and his owne comfort. Chriſt came to his Spouſe, ſaying *Open to me my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my faire one for my head is filled with dew, and my lockes with the drops of the night.* But though Chriſt thus kindly came to his Spouſe, yet ſhee unkind-

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ly put him off; and upon the matter no better then ſlighted him. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? &c.* Becauſe of this untractable carriage, Chriſt departed from his Spouſe, and then ſhee made many complaints: *I opened to my beloved, but hee had withdrawne himſelfe and was gone.* The Spouſe could not now truely ſay, that Chriſt had not come to her; but ſhee might truely ſay that hee did come to her, but ſhe ſlighted him, and therefore he was forc'd to leave her. Thus 'tis, with many now. They mourne like *Rachel*, in their miſery, and are not comforted, becauſe none from heaven comes to them: ſuch as theſe, cannot challenge Chriſt, for not making good his promiſe, to come to them, if formerly he have come to them, and they have ſlighted him. If any Phyſitian, obſerving my intemperancy in this or that, come to mee and tell mee, unleſſe you refraine ſuch and ſuch things, you will certainely fall into ſuch and ſuch diſeaſes, which are very dangerous; if I ſlight him in this, and afterward fall into thoſe diſeaſes, and lye groaning under them, I cannot blame my Phyſitian, for not comming to me, bnt blame my ſelfe that did ſo ſlight him. So 'tis betweene Chriſt and many a mourning ſoule; Chriſt hath come to them and told them, that if they go on in their ſinfull courſe, and that, that it will rob them quite of their heavenly comforts; but he in this friendly way hath beene ſo farre taken with the ſweetneſſe of ſomething below Chriſt, and ſo at laſt hath found the evill of his owne way, according to Chriſts prediction, and yet complaines of Chriſt not comming to

him; but how justly judge you.

Againe, as this soule possibly cannot justly complaine, that Christ hath not come to him: so possibly he cannot justly complaine, that Christ is not come to him. That soule which complains after Christ, cannot truely say, that Christ is not come to him: for wee never truely desire to come to Christ, or that Christ should come to us, unlesse hee were already with us, and we with him. Christ, I conclude then, is come to this complaining soule, though not in that manner and measure as he desires him. The thought of what I long for, if I have least hope of attaining it; is a degree of consolation.

Finally and more directly, I answer to this complaning soule thus, Christ as a sensible and satisfactory Comforter, comes to us at his time, and not at ours. Now Christs time to comfort mourners will make him most welcome; and that is usually when the soule is brought to the greatest extremity, that it is capable of, and not utterly miscarry. When *Peter* was ready to sinke on the Sea, and cryed out, *Master, save me or I perish*, then Christ came to him, and caught him by the hand: thus doth Christ usually come with sensible and satisfactory consolations, when poore soules are almost quite spent with temptations, and soule anguish, and looke every houre when they shall dy and drop into hell. *Hee shall come to us as the latter and former raine unto the earth*, saith the Prophet. That is, at the seasonablest time, when the soule will make him most welcome; and that is, when burnt and scorcht with Satans fierie darts, as the earth with the heat of the sunne;

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when parcht and chapt gaping for ſome heavenly ſhowers: then Chriſts viſits will bee kindneſſe indeed: and Chriſts conſolations, ſweet indeed. This ſtill remember, O mourning ſoul! that Chriſt keeps his word, if he doe not *leave us comfortleſſe*: and this be aſſured he will not doe, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

But why wilt thou come to mee, O my Saviour? To this I anſwer, firſt thus; *viz.* Chriſt will come to his Church Militant to bee a Comforter to fulfill his Fathers will. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon mee*, ſaith Chriſt, *becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meeke: He hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaime liberty to the Captive, and the opening of priſon to them that are bound, to proclaime the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourne; &c.* By this Text we ſee; that Chriſt is anointed for this end: To come to us and bee our Comforter, whileſt we live here below mourning in *Sion*. What is ſaid of the three friends of *Iob*, that may I ſay of the bleſſed Trinity, *They made an appointment together to come to comfort him.* So the bleſſed Trinity have made and appointment together to us by Chriſt; and in all diſtreſſes, ſweetly to comfort us.

Secondly, Chriſt will come as a Comforter to his Church Militant, becauſe hee hath promiſed. t. as Chriſt promiſed this in my Text; ſo in many other Texts. *And if I goe away, I will prepare a place for you, and will come againe: and I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that may abide with you for ever.* By theſe promiſes Chriſt hath obliged himſelfe, to come as a Com-

forter to us: let therefore our deſervings of comfort be what they will; Chriſt will come to us, becauſe hee hath promiſed he will. Chriſt ſtands much upon his word: Chriſt is God, and *God cannot ly. Though wee beeleeve not, yet hee abideth faithfull and cannot deny himſelfe.* A Cſtriſtian is ready to ſay to Chriſt as *Ieptha* to the Elders of *Gilead*: *Did not ye hate me, and expell mee out of my Fathers houſe? and why are yee come to me now, when yee are in diſtreſſe?* ſaid *Ieptha.* So ſaith a Chriſtian, did not I hate thee O my Saviour, and did not I doe what in mee lay to expell thee from my ſoule, by my ſinning againe and againe againſt thy Spirit? And why art thou come to mee now, to comfort me in my diſtreſſe? Why, this that was foreſaid, may ſuffice, O ſinfull ſoul, as an anſwer. Chriſt looks not at what thou haſt done but at what he hath promiſed; and his word he will keepe, though wee change as the heavens: heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but not one jot of his word ſhall fall to the ground. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

Theſe I conceive are the principall grounds, why Chriſt comes as a Comforter to his Church Militant: two grounds more may be alledged, as *Cauſæ minus principales*, leſſe principle cauſes; the firſt whereof is This. Chriſt comes to us in our diſtreſſes as a Comforter, that we may not ſtretch out our hands unto iniquity. Man in diſtreſſe is ſo deſirous of eaſe, that if Chriſt doe not come to him and comfort him, he'll goe to Sinne and Satan for eaſe. *Cain* was diſconſolate, and becauſe Chriſt did not come to him as a Comforter; he ran like a vagabond up and downe the world, to finde

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eaſe in any thing. *Iudas* was diſconſolate, and becauſe Chriſt as a Comfortor did not come to him, he made a halter his comforter. *Saul* being in diſtreſſe by the *Philiſtines*, becauſe Chriſt did not come to him by Urim, nor by Viſion, nor by Prophets, he went to the devill for comfort. Now that Chriſts children may not thus doe, *Chriſt will not leave them comfortleſſe, but will come to them.*

The ſecond ground why Chiſt will come to his Church Militant as a Comforter, is this: That hee may ſtop the mouthes of all ungodly wretches, who ſay of the godly when in great diſtreſſes *Perſecute and take them, for there is none to deliver them.* A wicked man looking upon a wounded ſoule with a carnall eye, breakes out into ſome ſuch language, as *Achiſh* did concerning *David. Lo you ſee the man is mad.* This man is a diſtracted perſon, fitter for Bedlam, then for Gods houſe: an idle crackt braine fellow, unfit to come into ſolemne aſſemblies. Now that Chriſt may ſilence ſuch blacke mouth'd men as theſe, he graciouſly comes to ſuch wounded ſouls, and heales their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds; hee powres the Spirit of conſolation upon ſuch as went mourning all the day long, and makes them walk with joy and ſtrong conſolation, ſo that ſuch as cenſured them for this and that, are forc'd to lay their hand upon their mouth, and to condemne themſelves as blinde Bats, and not able to diſcerne the wayes of God towards his children.

Having thus opened the point in hand, I will in the next place ſhew you how uſefull it is, to the wicked and to the godly. Will not Chriſt leave any of his children upon earth comfortleſſe, but

ſtill as a Comforter come to them? Then you which live in your ſinnes, and ſo conſquently none of Chriſts children; may collect the unhappineſſe of your condition from this point. You ſhall live and die comfortleſſe, for Chriſt will not come to you as a Comforter; thus he comes onely to his children. Chriſt will not come to you in proſperity as a Comforter; and therefore in the midſt of ſenſuall laughter, your hearts will be ſad: in the midſt of all thy wordly contents, thy ſpirit will at times gnaw and beat within thee: And never will all thou enjoyeſt give any complacency of comfort to thee, becauſe Chriſt as a Comforter comes not to thee. All outward comforts, without the inward conſolations of Chriſt, they are as good broath unſeaſoned, which rather cloys then contents the appetite; they weary, diſtract, and vex, and not revive the owner. Be it, that thou art as wiſe as *Achitophel*, as eloquent as *Herod*, as learned as *Gamaliel*, as rich as *Nabal*, as honourable as *Haman*, as great in the Church as *Iudas*; why, yet ſhalt thou live comfortleſſe; that is, utterly deſtitute of Celeſtiall conſolation; one drop whereof hath more ſoule-reviving ſweetneſſe in it, then all the things of this life can afford. Alas! what is learning? what is wit, wealth, honour, or any other wordly thing to comfort me, if Chriſt do not come to me. A man may have all that this world can afford; and yet hang himſelfe for want of comfort, if Chriſt come not to him, as *Achitophell*, *Iudas*, and others have done.

Ob. No men laugh lowder, nor laugh oftner then wicked men in proſperity: no man merrier in an Alehouſe, Playhouſe, Taverne, Faire, or Market, then they: and are not theſe then the one-

ly comfortable men in the world.

Sol. To this I answer first thus: Laughter is one thing; and Spirituall Consolation another thing. Every one that laughs, hath not a cheerfull spirit within: for in the midst of laughter a mans heart may be sad, saith *Solomon*. And so on the other hand; every one that hath a comfortable spirit, hath not a laughing face: Wee do not read that Christ ever laughed, and yet had more comfort in his Spirit, then all the merrie men of this world.

Secondly, I answer thus: Some mens spirits are so left of God to levitie and vanity, that they will laugh at the wagging of a straw (as we say.) This is a great judgement of God upon the spirit, and not to be accounted a comfortable and happy condition? *'Tis a past time to fooles to do wickedly*, saith *Solomon*. This is not properly called *mirth* (saith he) but *madnesse*. You shall see mad men laugh sometimes exceedingly, and hoop and hallow, as if their spirits were as full of joy as they could hold: what shall we conclude now, that these forlorne creatures are in a comfortable condition? Alas! say wee, if they were but sensible of their condition, they would soon cease laughing, and begin lamenting. And so may I say to you of all that laugh and rejoyce, and yet live in their sinnes, and so consequently have no comforter from heaven come to them, they are mad men: were their eyes open to see their forlorne condition, they would quickly change their note, and turne their mirth into mourning, as *Iames* saith.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come to the wicked in prosperity?

Answ. Yes, no doubt to bee made of it. Christ came

came to *Belshazzar* whilst he was quaffing in the golden vessels of the temple and wrote downe his wickednesse in the wall. And thus he comes to all ungodly persons in prosperity, to write downe all their ungodly deeds, that so he may exactly judge them at the great day of account.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come as a Comforter, to wicked men that are great and wealthy?

Answ. Christ regards no man for his wealth, or for any externall greatnesse. If a man be never so rich, or never so honourable, yet if he have not denyed his lusts, and given up himselfe to Christ, to bee ruled by him, Christ will never come to comfort him, if he would give him all he hath for his paines; he will not step a foot out of doors to a Prince, if he be wicked.

Ob. Why, but though he will not come to ungodly men as a Comforter in prosperity, when they can make some shift without him, yet hee will come to them as a Comforter in adversity, when all other comforts faile.

Sol. No he will not. Christ will not know thy soule in adversity, which art a disobeyer of him. As hee would not let *Dives* have a drop of water to coole his tongue, though in unutterable torments, where many Oceans would not in the least measure have quenched the flames; no neither will he afford thee the least drop of consolation in thy greatest extremity; though thou cry Lord, Lord, and cut thy flesh in the fervency of thy spirit, like *Baals* Priests, to prevaile; yet shalt thou be sent empty away. Nay Christ will be so farre from being a Comforter to ungodly men when in misery; that

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Hee will adde to their outward misery, inward misery. When thy body is in distresse, Christ will awaken thy soule, that now lies asleep, and set thy conscience a gnawing within thee, which will be greater torture then if thou wert rackt in every limbe. Thou maist send for godly Ministers and godly friends to comfort thee then, and they possibly may deliver very comfortable things, but they shall be of no more savour to thy soule, then the white of an egge; because Christ as a Comforter will not speake those sweet things to thy soule, which thy friends doe to thy eares. As the Lord bewailes the miserable condition of *Ierusalem*; so may I bewaile the miserable condition of all ungodly men. *These two things are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction; and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?* So say I to all ungodly persons: misery upon misery will first or last seize upon you, and who then shall be sorry for you? Famine, and sword, and pestilence; sickneſse, and death, and judgement; and by whom will you bee comforted? your Honours cannot comfort you: your Riches and Friends cannot comfort you: your father the Devill he will not then comfort you: your Conscience which you have often sinned against, shall not comfort you, but torture you: because Christ will not come to you, to sprinkle it with his blood, and to pacifie it. So that I conclude all; thus you will live comfortleſse, die comfortleſse, and abide in hell after death everlastingly comfortleſse.

'Tis true all that you say Sir: man is a comfortleſse creature indeed, unleſse Christ come to him, I finde it by wofull experience. I have much wealth in

in my purſe, and yet but little peace in my ſpirit. I ſee the devill (me thinkes) now and then, ſit a ſtride upon the top of my money-bags, waiting for mee, when I come to comfort my ſelfe in the beholding of them: and to what this will come at laſt; I cannot tell. Sin, I am ſure I do; and comfortleſſe becauſe of ſinne, I am: and more comfortleſſe every day I look to be, unleſſe Chriſt come to mee, and yet how to get him to come to me, I know not.

Would'ſt thou, O comfortleſſe creature! have Chriſt to come to thee? Doe then to Chriſt as *Lydia* did to *Paul*, lovingly invite him to come to thee. Make knowne thy comfortleſſe condition to Chriſt, and then earneſtly entreat him to viſit they poore ſoule. The ground why I exhort thee O ſinner! thus to doe; is, becauſe God hath promiſed, *to give his holy Spirit to them that aske it*, Luke 11. 13. If therefore thou wouldeſt have Chriſt by his Spirit to come to thee; invite him, aske him, begge, and entreat him to come and dwell in thy ſoule; and tell him that he ſhall have every roome in thy heart at command. As *Rebeckahs* brother ſaid to *Abrahams* ſervant; So doe thou ſay to Chriſt; *Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? for I have prepared the houſe, and roome for the Camels*, &c. Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? here is roome for thee and all thy glorious traine. Here's an underſtanding, will, memory, affections, they ſhall be all at thy uſe and ſervice O Chriſt, wherefore come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, and make thy abode with me. Thus continue crying to Chriſt, and longing for him, and by this thou wilt declare thy great love unto him, and ſo make thy ſelfe capable of

of that ſweet promiſe, which ſaith, *If a man love me, the Father loveth him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* John 14. 12. Then will thy condition be comfortable indeed, when thou haſt got ſuch glorious in-mates as theſe to dwell with thee.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit to the wicked, by way of application from this point; I will now addreſſe my ſelfe to ſpeak unto the godly, and ſhew them how uſefull this point may be unto them. I ſhall firſt ſpeake to ſtrong men, and then unto Babes in Chriſt: to ſuch as can tell me, that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them. Secondly, to ſuch as can tell mee they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them: and laſtly, to ſuch who can tell me that they have found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them, but now they have loſt him. To you that tell mee you finde the truth of this doctrine by bleſſed experience, that Chriſt is come to you; I have only two things to ſay: Firſt this, Make it ſure to thy ſelfe that Chriſt indeed as a Comforter is come to thee, and that thy ſoule is not deluded in thy joy and conſolation. Secondly, ſtrive ſo to walk; that thy Comforter which is come to thee may never depart from thee. Firſt, ſtrive to make it ſure, that Chriſt indeed come to thee: that the comfort which thou haſt is from the Comforter, to wit: the Spirit of Chriſt; and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

There is great need that I ſhould preſſe this inſtruction upon you, becauſe the ſpirit of deluſion is plentifully powred out in theſe latter dayes. The hypocrite hath his joy; and and he judges that this his joy, is the joy of the holy Ghoſt, and as good

as need to bee: whereas it is a joy that ſhall *periſh* (ſaith the Scripture (a joy that will end in deſperate ſorrow. Hee thinkes that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to him; whereas 'tis only the devill transformed into an Angell of light. And thus indeed are many thouſands gulled and cheated in their comfort. Sadneſſe would overſhadow the ſmiling face of many a man, if he did but diſcerne how groundleſſe his joy and comfort is; and what a vaine ſhadow inſtead of a true ſubſtance, his poore ſoule is deluded withall. Wherefore my brethren! it concernes you that tell me, you are ſenſible that the Comforter is come to you; to take paines to make it ſure to your ſelves, that your ſoules are not deluded.

When the Spirit of God came upon *Saul* that he propheſied, the people that knew him before, ſaid, *What is come to the ſonne of Kiſh? is Saul amongſt the Prophets?* Thus doe thou ſay to thy ſoule, who art ſo merry and comfortable, *viz.* What is come to thee O my ſoul! that thou art now ſo joyfull and chearfull? Once I am ſure thou went'ſt mourning all the day long: is Chriſt as a Comforter come to thee? If Chriſt by his Spirit have brought glad tidings to thee, why then O my glory! continue in thy mirth: but if not; why art thou ſo merry O my ſoule? thy mirth is but madneſſe. As *David* queſtioned his ſoule for ſadneſſe, ſaying, *Why art thou ſo ſad, O my ſoule? and why art thou ſo caſt downe within me?* So maiſt thou doe well to queſtion thy mirth, ſaying; Why art thou ſoe merry O my ſoule? and why art thou ſoe much lifted up within mee? Is thy Comforter our Lord Ieſus Chriſt indeed come to thee? O then my g'o-

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ry! ceaſe not to declare thy comfort, by any comely poſture and geſture: but if not, a houſe of mourning, O my ſoule, is fitter for thee then a houſe of mirth; garments of ſackcloth and ſadneſſe, would better become thee, then garments of joy and gladneſſe. You know how *Iſaac* once ſpake to his ſon, *Art thou* (ſaid he) *my very ſon Eſau?* Gen. 27. 24. So do thou humbly queſtion thy Comforter. Art thou my very Comforter indeed? Art thou the *very Chriſt* the Sonne of God, which ſpeakeſt conſolation to my ſoule? You know how *Iohn* queſtioned Chriſt much after this manner, that hee might not be deceived concerning him. *Art thou he that ſhould come, or do we not look for another?* Math. 11. 3. So doe thou ſay, Art thou hee that ſhould come and comfort my ſoule? or ſhould not I look for another? There be many falſe Chriſts, and falſe comforters now in the world, and they deceive many: wherefore I beſeech thee ſpeak out, and ſpeak plainly to my ſoule, whether thou be hee that ſhould comfort meé yea or not, that if I have obtained the true Comforter, I may give God the glory of his great kindneſſe; if not, I may ſeek out for another.

How ſhould I know (may the ſtrong man in Chriſt ſay to me) whether he that is come to my ſoule with conſolation; be hee that ſhould, come or not? How ſhould I be able to make it ſure to my ſoul, that the conſolation which I have is from the Spirit of Chriſt, and not from the ſpirit of deſolution.

To this I thus anſwer, *viz.* If he that is come to thy ſoule be he that ſhould come, to wit, Chriſt; thou ſhalt finde that hee doth more works then one in thy ſoule: hee doth not onely comfort thee, but he

he doth many great works besides this. Christ doth many great works in a mans soule before he comforts him; and hee doth many great workes in his soule, after hee hath comforted him. Christ doth many great workes in the soule of man, before hee comforts him: hee doth break the heart before he bindes it up: hee first wounds the heart, before hee will heale it: hee casts downe the soule for sinne, before hee will raise it up. Now to breake the heart of man, which the Scripture compares to an *Adamant*, Zech. 7. 12. for hardnesse, is a great work; and yet this doth Christ throughly, before he comforts throughly. The breaking of the heard heart of man, hath many great works about it, ere it be effected. The convincing the soule of sinne, which selfe conceited man is not easily brought unto. The making of sinne out of measure sinfull, in the souls apprehension, which blind man is not easily brought to see. The making of man to loath himselfe, for the evils which he hath committed against God, which man full of selfe-love is not easily wrought unto. The making of man to long for peace and reconciliation with God, as the greatest happinesse in the world, and to begg this blessing with teares as a soule that sees hee shall die and perish eternally without it; which man that naturally hates God, is not easily wonne unto. Yet all these difficult workes doth Christ doe in the soule of man, before hee comes as a Comforter to him. Which Christ confirmes, where he saith; *Blessed are they that that mourne, for they shall bee comforted.*

Now would'st thou know whether hee that is come to thy soule, be hee that should come or not? why then tell me? What did precede thy comfort which

which now thou haſt? Did Chriſt lead thee to the Wels of Conſolation by the waters of *Marah*? Did hee bring thee to ſowe in teares, ere he gave thee to reap thy great harveſt of joy? Waſt thou ever in the houſe of mourning? Did the ſpirit of heavineſſe for ſinne ever take hold on thee? Was thy hard heart firſt broken, and after this bound up? Firſt wounded, and after this healed? Didſt thou goe mourning for diſhonouring God all the day long, and after many dolorous dayes ſpent, did thy Comforter come to thee? Surely then he that is come, is he that ſhould come, and doe not looke for another: but if otherwiſe; thou haſt juſt cauſe to be jealous of thy joy.

Againe, Chriſt as hee doth great works in the ſoule before hee comforts it; ſo hee doth great works in the ſoule after he hath comforted it. That ſoule which Chriſt comforts, hee makes a very fruitfull ſoule in all grace to his glory. No waters make the ſoule of a Chriſtian grow in grace, like the waters of Conſolation. The comforting Spirit of Chriſt is to a Chriſtian in the wayes of obedience, as winde and tide to a Ship: that which makes him runne the wayes of Gods Commandements. That Chriſtian which is comforted by Chriſt, prayes fervently, and prayes frequently. Conſolation gives winges to ſupplication. That Chriſtian which is comforted by Chriſt, praiſeth God with ſtrong affection. A ſoule comforted by Chriſt, is as an inſtrument well tuned by a skilful Muſician; hee will, upon every occaſion, make ſweet melody in the eares of the Almighty. True conſolation is from Heaven, and it carries that ſoule ſtrongely to Heaven, in which it is. True conſola-

tion is from Christ, and it will make a Christian live wholly to Christ. To whom much is forgiven they love much: and his love constraines them to deny themselves, and to follow Christ unto death.

Would'st thou know then for certaine, O strong man in Christ! that he which is come to thy soule, is he which should come? Why then looke what activity is in thy soule to duty. Is thy soule as a Gyant refreshed after wine? strong and vigorous to the practise of all good duties? Art thou abundant in the work of the Lord? Art thou a sweet Singer in *Israel* of the praises of the Lord? Is thy heart at thy mouth leaping within thee, like the Babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when thou art telling what God hath done for thy soule? Art thou (in a word) a holy and heavenly man, as one comforted by a holy and heavenly God; Doth thy joy transcend the joyes that this world affords, in sweetnesse? Doth it raise thy spirit to admire the love of God? and doth it make thee dead to secular delights? and to account naked carnall mirth madnesse? empty huskes for brutes to feed on? Then mayest thou comfortably conclude, that he which is come to thy soul, is he which should come; and do not look for another: but if thou art merry and chearfull, but not holy and heavenly, he that is come to thy soule, is not he that should come; wherefore I beseech thee to looke for another.

A second instruction which I would commend to strong men in Christ, is this: after thou hast made it sure to thy soule, that Christ as a Comforter is indeed come to thee, then strive so to walke, that

that hee may never depart from thee. So a man may may walk, that Christ as a Comforter may forsake his soule. *David* had wofull experience of this truth, and so doublesse have many else of the godly. So a man may walk that Christ as a Comforter never depart from him. But how should I thus walke, saith the comforted soule, that I might enjoy this heaven below, till I come to that above, and so go from joy to joy ; from joy unspeakeable and full of glory, to joy that cannot enter into any mortall heart to conceive of?

To this I thus answer, Do not grieve Christ that is come to thee: Secondly, doe all that thou canst to delight him, if thou would'st have him continually abide with thee. Do not sit downe and rest, as one that hath a licence to be lazy, and as if all thy worke were done, now thy Comforter is come to thee ; this will grieve him, and quickly make him leave thee. Thou hast obtained Christ to come a Comforter to thee ; well : yet let me tell thee as *Moses* did the *Israelites*. *You are not* (said hee) *as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* So say I to thee, O comforted soule ! thou art not yet come to those degrees of consolation, which thou mayest attaine unto in this life, if thou continue to be thriftie. The joy of the holy Ghost is a bottomlesse Well, which thou canst never draw dry : and the more thou drawest, the fresher and sweeter still shalt thou finde it. The joy of the holy Ghost is no surfetting thing, as some earthly sweets are : and therefore thou mayest safely say, *Lord evermore give me of this bread* : fill my soule with flagons of this precious liquour : let thy love be shed abroad in my heart by the

holy Ghost: let my soule delight her selfe in this fatnesse.

Secondly, now Christ as a Comforter is come to thee, doe not wax wanton against him, this also will grieve him, and make him quickly forsake thy soule as a Comforter. Let all the manifestations of thy comfort bee suitable to thy Comforter: holy as he is holy; spirituall and heavenly, as he is. *When ye are come into the good land take heed that ye doe not forget the Lord* (said *Moses* to *Israel.*) So say I to you that finde Christ with you as a Comforter, which are come to the fellowship of the Spirit, and to the participation of that transcendent comfort which is by him: take heed that yee grow not giddy headed, and forget God and your selves, The waters of Consolation are strong waters, and mans weak head and heart cannot beare much of them steadily, but are ready to reele on one side or other. When the clouds of heaven have well watered the earth, then doe weeds as well as good hearbs spring apace: so when Christ by his Spirit, sweetly waters the soule with Consolation, then levitie and vanitie, as well as Christian mirth and cheerefulnesse, spring amaine; If a Christian be not very watchfull over his soule, to plucke up such weeds by the roots, as soone as they begin to shew themselves. I conclude this, thus, thou that art comforted by the Spirit, let not the manifestation of thy comfort grieve the Spirit. This remember, that Satan hath an Art to bring evill out of the greatest good, as God hath an Art to bring good out of the greatest evill: and therefore beg that thou mayest not be ignorant of any of his devices, nor unable to resist them if thou would'st not loose thy Comforter.

Secondly,

Secondly, if thou would'ſt have thy Comforter to abide ſtill with thee; as thou muſt not grieve him, ſo thou muſt do all that thou canſt to delight him. Let bee thy meat and drink to follow all the motions of the Spirit of Chriſt: whitherſoever Chriſt would have thee go, cheerefully obey him; this will delight thy Comforter exceedingly, and make him to rejoyce to continue with thee. If Chriſt ſay unto thee as to the Fiſhermen, *Follow mee*: doe thou readily reply as the Scribe, *Maſter; I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.* Mat. 4.19. Mat. 8.19. This is to decare the genuine diſpoſition of Chriſts people, which Chriſt is exceedingly taken withall. Chriſts people are as a willing people in their obedience. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, &c.*

Secondly, humbly and compaſſionately tell diſconſolate ſoules, what Chriſt ha th donefor my ſoule: this will delight thy Comforter much, and make him rejoyce to continue with thee. Chriſt delights to ſee his children communicative of the ſweet meats which he gives them. And therefore as *Iael* ſaid to *Barak*, ſo do thou, O comforted ſoule, to ſuch as goe mourning all the day long: *Come* (ſaid ſhe) *and I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt.* Judges. 4. 32. Come, O ſad ſoule, that canſt not finde him whom thy ſoule loveth, I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt; the manner of his comming to my poore ſoule; and how long he made me wait upon him, ere hee would come to mee; and how well hee hath now made mee amends for all his ſtaying. And therefore, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet judgement is before him, therefore turſt thou in him.*

Job. 35. 14. *For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speake and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* Hab. 2. 3. The more imparting of experiments of love wee are, to the glory of Christ; the more still will Christ graciously give us to our further comfort. And this indeed is Gods end in comforting some of his children, *that they may bee able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God:* as the Apostle sweely affirmes.

Thirdly, thanke Christ humbly and heartily for his comming to thee; if thou would'st have him abide still with thee. The Israelites when they came into the promised land which flowed with milke and honey, they were to take the first of all the fruits of the earth, and put them in a basket, and so present them to the Priest, saying, *viz. And now behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou the Lord hast given me*: Deut. 26. Thus were they to set their first fruits before the Lord and to worship before him, as you may see at large. Why you that enjoy Christ, as a Comforter, you have received the first fruits of that good land which *Canaan* typified, which flowes with milk and honey. Bring therefore these first fruits, and set them before God, and worship: bring the sweet comforts of the holy Ghost in your hearts, before the Lord, and say, Behold O Christ, these and these are the sweet Consolations of thy Spirit: and lo for them all I humbly render praise to thy Name. Such mighty enemies of my peace hast thou conquered: such doubts which so long troubled mee, hast thou answered: such wants which

so

ſo long time kept me exceeding low, haſt thou ſupplyed: to thee O God be the glory of thine owne goodneſſe.

You have great cauſe thus to magnifie the Lord for his mercy, which finde Chriſt as a Comforter come to you. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth all outward bleſſings. The light of Gods countenance lifted up, upon a poore mourning ſoule, 'tis of far greater value then Corne, Wine, Oile; then Corrall, Rubies, or any choice thing that this world can afford. The naked revelation of Chriſt in the ſoule of man, is of more worth then all theſe, ſaith *Solomon*: the moſt glorious revelation of Chriſt then to the ſoule, which the ſoule of man is capable of in this life; muſt needs be of much more tranſcendent worth. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth many inward bleſſings. It exceedeth knowledge: for what is knowledge in the head, to the joy of the holy Ghoſt in the heart? one beame of light in the underſtanding, is of more worth then all the Silver and Gold, Gems, and Jewels in the world; and yet one beame of the light of Gods countenance, ſhining upon the heart, though but by reflection from the face of Jeſus Chriſt, is of more worth then all knowledge which humane ſtudy can attaine unto. I cannot ſay that this bleſſing, exceedeth the leaſt ſaving grace in the ſoule: but this I can ſafely ſay; that Conſolation, 'tis the gloſſe and glory of every grace: every grace ſhines in its full luſtre, where the Comforter dwels. This I can further ſay, that you enjoy that bleſſing which makes Heaven a Heaven, and which makes Earth a Heaven to you: and therefore you have great reaſon to magnifie

the Lord for his mercy. The more of Heaven we enjoy upon Earth, the more ſhould we ſet our ſelves to doe the work of them which are in Heaven, whileſt on Earth.

Fourthly, finally let Chriſts inediate comming to thee by his Spirit, make thee long earneſtly for his immediate comming to thee in his own perſon: this delights Chriſt, that his Spouſe ſhould ſay, *Come*, Revelation 22.17. as the Spirit doth; That ſhee ſhould long for the wedding day, as he doth. When good old *Simeon* had imbraced the Conſolation of *Iſrael*, for which he ſo long waited, hee then deſired preſently to be diſſolved: ſo thou that haſt imbraced the Conſolation of *Iſrael*, ſhould'ſt in holy manner with *Simeon*, *Job*, and *Paul*, deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all. You whom Chriſt hath kiſſed with the kiſſes of his lips, ſhould long earneſtly to lie betweene his breaſts all night; my meaning is, to have a full enjoyment of Chriſt. Thus have I done ſpeaking to ſuch who can tell me that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them.

In the next place I addreſſe my ſelfe to ſpeak to ſuch of the godly, who can tell mee that they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them. Two or three things I have to ſay to you from this ſweet doctrine.

Firſt, I would have you to labour to beleeve this doctrine, that Chriſt *will not leave you comfortleſſe, but will certainly* (at laſt) *come to you.* Chriſt hath repeated his promiſe, which is as a bond with many ſeales; and therefore thou haſt juſt ground to beleeve, O comfortleſſe ſoule! that Chriſt *will not leave thee comfortleſſe but will come to thee.*

Object.

Object. What juſt ground have I to beleeve, that Chriſt will come to me, ſeeing he is holy, and I am unholy: hee is glorious in holineſſe, and I am abominable in ſin and wickedneſſe, ſaith the weake comfortleſſe ſoule.

Sol. Art thou more vile then *Manaſſeth*? Chriſt came to him and comforted him. Art thou more muddy and earthly then *Zacheus*? Chriſt came to him and comforted him. Art thou more diveliſh then *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom were caſt ſeven devils? Chriſt came to her, and filled her ſoule with ſtrong Conſolation. Why ſhould'ſt not thou beleeve, that Chriſt will come to thee too and quiet and comfort thy mourning ſpirit?

Sol. But ſecondly I anſwer thus: *viz.* Chriſt doth not ſo much looke how thou art quallified, as at what hee hath promiſed: Chriſt hath promiſed hee will come to thee, and he is faithfull and will do it. If my ſoule were never ſo poore, never ſo blinde, never ſo wretched, never ſo naked; yet Chriſt having promiſed to come to thee, he will make good his word; though he come backward, with a mantle to cover thy nakedneſſe, as *Shem* and *Iaphet* did to *Noah*. If thy ſoule were full of wounds; if thy ſoule were full of running putrifying ſores, if thou wert as black with ſin as an *Ethiopian*; if thou wert as ſpotted with ſinne as a Leopard; nay if thy ſoule did ſtinke within thee, as *Lazarus* after taken out of the earth again: yet Chriſt having promiſed to come to thee and comfort thee; he will doe it, though he hold his noſe while he be comforting thy ſtinking naſty ſoul. Heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but not a jot nor tittle of Chriſt promiſe ſhall faile. *The voice*

of

of my Beloved, behold hee cometh leaping upon the Mountaines, and skipping upon the Hills. Cant. 2. 8. Though there be mountaines and hils of sinne in thy soule; yet Christ will come skipping over all these with comfort to my soule, rather then thou shalt be left comfortlesse.

Wherefore, O weake, comfortlesse soule! say not of thy Saviour and Comforter, as *Balaam* did, *I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.* Num. 24.17. I shall see Christ come with a witnesse: nay with many thousand witnesses at the great day, when *every eye shall see him*; but I shall not see him come to me now, in this soule dolour, as a Comforter. I shall behold him peradventure, as *Moses* beheld the Holy land farre off: hee will never come nigh my poore soule, to stay it, with those comforts which it needs, Cease, O weake soule, this incredulous language; and strive to beleeve, and this sweet promise I treat of shall bee made good unto thee. No sinne so mighty to keep thy Comforter from thee, as unbeliefe. Say then, O mourning Christian, to thy comfortlesse soule; *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. 10. 37. He that hath said he will come as a Comforter to thee, will come and will satisfie thy soule with Consolation, as with marrow and fatnesse. Say to to thy sad soule, with the Psalmist. *My God will come, and will not keepe silence:* hee will speake Consolation so plainely, that my ignorant soule shall understand; so powerfully, that my incredulous soule shall beleeve, and owne her owne mercies. Thou art now tossed and almost drowned, O my soul, with restlesse wayes of misery; but the Spirit will move

move upon theſe waters; thou ſhalt ſee Chriſt comming towards thee, upon theſe troubleſome wayes anon, and ſay, *bee not afraid, it is I*: I that have loved thee, and given my ſelfe for thee, and none ſhall pluck thee out of my hand.

Secondly, as I would have thee to ſtrive firmly to beleeve this truth; ſo I would have thee endeavour patiently to wait the accompliſhment of it. Beleeve that Chriſt will come to thee, and wait patiently untill hee doe come. There is good ground why every ſoule ſhould patiently wait for Chriſt, comming to him, whether wee conſider our ſelves which are to bee viſited, or Chriſt our viſitour. If thou O comfortleſſe ſoule conſider thy ſelfe which art to bee viſited; there is great reaſon thou ſhouldeſt wait patiently till Chriſt come to thee, how long ſoever he ſtay.

Firſt, thou art a Creature, and Chriſt is thy Creatour; and ſhould not a Creature wait on his Creatour? Thou art a ſervant, and Chriſt is thy Lord: and ſhould not a ſervant wait on his Lord? Conſider thee in thy higheſt relations, and they all call for waitng. Thou art a Son, and Chriſt is thy Father: and ſhould not a Sonne wait on his Father? Thou art a Wife, and Chriſt is thy Husband; and ſhould not a Wife wait on her Husband?

Secondly, conſider that thou haſt deſerved, that Chriſt ſhould never come to thee, and yet for all this, ſeeing hee will come thee, haſt not thou juſt cauſe to wait patiently till hee doe come, how long ſo ever it be firſt? Before thy calling thou didſt reject Chriſt; and ſince thy calling, thou haſt often grieved Chriſt; and haſt not thou then deſerved

that

that Christ should never come to thee? Thou hast quenched many a sweet motion of the Spirit of Christ: thou hast turned the deafe eare, the sweet still voice that hath spoken behinde thee, times without number, and so slighted the Spirit of Christ; and hast not thou then justly deserved, that Christ as a Comforter should never come to thee? yet seeing he will come, for all this unkindnesse, hast not thou just cause to wait patiently for him, how long so ever he stay; Thou hast many weekes, many moneths, nay many yeeres, gone along in a course of grieving Christ; and doest thou thinke much of waiting a few weekes, a few moneths, a few yeeres, for Christ to come to comfort thee?

Take this in another forme: thou didst make Christ wait along time upon thee, ere thou wouldest let him abide with thee as a spirit of Reformation: and is there not just cause, then that thou shouldest wait patiently a long time upon him, if he will have it so, ere hee abide with thee as a Spirit of Consolation? how many knocks did Christ give at thy stubborn heart, ere thou wouldest open to him? how much dew of the night distilled upon his lockes, ere thou wouldest give him house roome in thy heart? how many mercies? how many corrections were all spilt upon thee, ere Christ could winne thee to respect him? canst thou tell? if thou canst not; think not much, if Christ make thee shed a few teares, and breath out a few groanes, ere he bring glad tidings of peace unto thee.

Secondly, if thou consider Christ thy visitour, there is all the reason that can be, that thou shouldest

deſt wait patiently till he come to thee. Chriſt will certainely come to thee: Chriſt will come to thee at the fitteſt time: Chriſt will come richly when he doth come; which are all ſpeciall grounds of patience. Chriſt will come to thee, O comfortleſſe ſoule! though it may ſeeme to thee, ſomething long firſt. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will not come at all, as the *Turke* waiteth for *Mahomet*: nay, thou doeſt not wait for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his comming. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will decive thee. Chriſt hath promiſed to come to thee, and he is faithfull, and cannot deny himſelfe. There is two things in Faithfulneſſe: firſt, that a man ſhould own what he hath ſaid; and then ſecondly, that hee ſhould make it good. Now both theſe will Chriſt doe: Chriſt will not eat his words, as we ſay: what hee hath promiſed he will confeſſe, and will make good; whatſoever labour or loſſe hee bee at to doe it. Chriſt is not mutable as we are to promiſe one thing to day, and recall it againe to morrow: *hee is immutable and changeth not, therefore we are not conſumed.*

Thou doeſt not wait for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his comming. Chriſt will not deale with thy comfortleſſe ſoule, as thoſe forry gueſts dealt with Chriſt, make excuſes: one had bought a yoake of Oxen, and therefore could not come: another a Farme, &c. Chriſt will not tell thee, as *Abraham Dives* in hell, betweene thy ſoule and him is a great gulfe, ſo that there can be no entercourſe betweene them; Nor that from heaven to earth, is too long a journey for him to make: He will not tell thee, that the place where thy

thy ſicke comfortleſſe ſoule lies, is filthy, and altogether unfit for him to come to: He will not tell thee that thy ſoule is ſo farre gone in griefe and deſparate ſorrow, that it is in vaine for him to come to thee. Chriſt puts none of theſe delayes upon any of his patients.

No, the ground why Chriſt ſtayes is, that he may come at the fitteſt time; and then he will come with healing in his wings, if all the devils in hell ſhould oppoſe him, which mee thinkes ſhould be a ſatisfactory ground of patience, to any diſconſolate ſoule. If a Phyſitian yet apply this, and that, further evacuation; rather then cordials: as knowing the body not yet fit for cordials, will not any wiſe man ſubmit patiently to his way? ſo if Chriſt forbeare giving thy ſicke ſoule cordials, as he that well knowes thy ſoule not fit yet, for ſuch luſcious things, wilt not thou with much thankfulneſſe acknowledge his great care over thy ſoule, and with all patience wait his leaſure? I patiently undergoe the pain of drawing plaiſters, when I know my ſore is not fit for healing: thus ſhould it be in ſpirituall diſtreſſes: we ſhould patiently undergoe griefe and ſorrow untill our ſoules bee fit for conſolation, and then wee ſhall be ſure to have it.

Finally, be ſure of this, O mourning ſoule! that Chriſt will come richly, when hee doth come; and therefore me thinks thou ſhould'ſt wait patiently for him: what Merchant but would wait patiently, the returne of his ſhip in the longeſt voyage, if he were ſure that it would richly returne at laſt. Chriſt will come very richly furniſhed, with the comforts of the holy Ghoſt, which are unſpeakable

unſpeakable and glorious, to your ſoules that mourne after him, and wait for him. What the Apoſtle once ſpake of himſelfe in relation to the *Romanes*; that may I truly ſay of Chriſt, in relation to all that mourne after him: *And I am ſure that when I come unto you, I ſhall come* (ſaith he) *in the fulneſſe of the bleſſing of the Goſpell of Chriſt.* Rom, 15.29. Chriſt I am ſure, O mourning ſoule! when hee doth come unto thee, he will come in the fulneſſe of the bleſſing of the holy Ghoſt: thou ſhalt have joy in the holy Ghoſt unſpeakeable and glorious. Thou by long waiting art made a more vaſt veſſell to hold the precious waters of conſolation; and Chriſt by long ſtaying, doth (as I may ſay) the more furniſh himſelfe with theſe waters of life, to refreſh, fill and ſatisfie thy thirſty ſoule, when hee comes to thee. Chriſt will heale throughly thy broken heart and binde up all thy wounds: he will anſwer all thy doubts, and clear all thy ſcruples: hee will quiet thy quarrelling conſcience, and ſtill thy complaining ſpirit: he will fill thy ſad ſoule with joy and gladneſſe, and thy dejected ſpirit with ſongs of thankſgiving.

If theſe things, O mourning ſoule! will not make thee wait patiently, till thy Comforter come to thee, but thou wilt murmure and repine, and fall upon indirect wayes to get conſolation; know, that by this practiſe, thou wilt make thy condition more miſerable, then at preſent it is, Thou wilt grieve him that ſhould come as a Comforter to thee: and if thou by ſin make Chriſt grieve; how can Chriſt by his Spirit make thee rejoyce? and if thou ſet him a mourning that can only comfort thee; by whom wilt thou be comforted? Doſt thou

thou thinke to winne Christ to thee, by a dogged disposition? Christ may pitty, and cure thy humours, but t'will never bee by consolation. Hee will bring thee to bee lowly and meeke ere thou shalt finde rest to thy soule: hee will make thee willing to lie under his feet glad of crums of comfort, and willing to wait for them till Christ hath denied, and every child served.

If thy corrupt soule hanker after the pleasure of sin againe, because Christ as a Comforter doth not come to thee, and thou bee resolved to pick and chuse, amongst the sins thy soule knows, to finde out one that thy soule most loves, to make a Comforter to thee, as the *Israelites* in their dogged humour made them a captaine to returne to *Ægypt* againe; know this, that what sin thou pitchest upon to make a Comforter, that sin will Christ make a devill to torture thee: Christ will make thee know by wofull experience, that the sweetest sin is a bitter and miserable comforter: that the least sinne, is too great an evill, truly to comfort the soule: that to go to the devill for consolation, is to make faster haste for comfort, then good speed, that neither sin, nor any thing in the world beside sin shall comfort thy soule; when hee himselfe will not.

3 The last instruction that I have to commend to thee, O comfortlesse soule! that did'st never yet finde Christ as a Comforter come to thee, is this: observe how Christ comes, and do not put him off. Christ comes to comfortlesse souls with comfort, in a promise; as I have at large shewed you. The promise, Christ opens before the soule, that he may see the blessing wrapt up in it, which he needs: and then

then often repeates it to the ſoule, that he may rely upon it: inſtances to illuſtrate this way of Chriſt, I have given you, things muſt not be here againe repeated. That which here I would preſſe by way of Application, is, that you which are comfortleſſe ſoules, would obſerve this ſecret way of the Comforter, and meet him. Art thou tempted? and doſt thou now heare a ſweet ſtill voyce, as it were behind thee, ſaying *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee*? Why this is the voice of thy Beloved, that is come to thee, embrace what he ſaith, reſt upon it, turne not thy Comforter away now, by unbeliefe, and peeviſh pettiſh humours. Haſt thou fallen into ſinne, by the ſtrength of temptation, and thine owne corruption? and doſt thou heare ſuch a ſweet voyce behinde thee as this. *The blood of Ieſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin*? 1. *Ioh.* 1. 7. Why this is the language of thy beloved, he is come to comfort thee, O mourning ſoule, do not thruſt him away by unkind language of unbeliefe and paſſion. Heare what he ſaith, for it is ſweet: ſtrive to beleeve what he ſaith, for it is ſure. As *Iſaac* ſaid unto *Iacob* his ſonne, after he had ſome diſcourſe at a diſtance with him, *Come neere now and kiſſe me my ſonne*: Gen. 27. 26. So ſhould ſuch comfortleſſe ſoules ſay to Chriſt, when they heare Chriſt ſpeaking, as it were at a diſtance, ſoftly and coldly to them, the ſweet and melodious promiſes of his word; come neere now, O my beloved, and kiſſe me with theſe kiſſes of thy lips, for thy love is better then wine: what thou ſayeſt to my ſoul, ſay it with ſuch life, that my heart may no longer bee faithleſſe, but beleeve, and give glory to thee. I have now done

'Tis with many Chriſtians in their minority, as it was with *Samuel*, they doe not know the voice of the Lord, ſpeaking in a promiſe, and therefore though good to note this laſt inſtruction.

speaking to you, who never yet had the Comforter come to you.

I come now in the last place to speake a word or two particularly, to such of Gods people, who can tell mee that they have found Christ as a Comforter come to them, but now have lost Him. Three things I have to say to these. First, labour to be sensible of thy losse. Secondly, blame not Christ for departing from thee. Thirdly, use all holy meanes to get him to returne to thee againe. First I would have thee, O deserted soule! to labour be truly sensible of thy losse. Though it bee that some are deeply sensible of this great losse; yet others are as deeply stupid, which moves me to note this instruction. For a man to be stupid and senseless under corporall afflictions; argues a very ill temper of spirit; but for a man to bee stupid and senseless under spirituall afflictions, under such a spirituall affliction as this; the losse of the Sunne. The losse of Christ as a Comforter, argues a very ill temper of spirit indeed. Strive therefore, O deserted stupid soule! to affect thine heart throughly with thy losse. Thou hast lost more then *Iob*: when hee had lost children substance, health, honours, and friends: nay thou hast lost more, then if thou hadst lost this world; nay, thou hast lost more then if thou hadst lost thy life, which is of more worth then the world: thou hast lost Christ, which is richer then this world, and sweeter then thy life. What an infinite losse were it to this world, to loose the Sunne? 'twere at once to loose all: *Pereunte sole, pereunt omnia*; for all things serviceable for the use of man, depend upon the motion and influence of that glorious Body. What

a losse then is to the lesser world, to loose Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse? 'Tis to loose all good at once, for soule and body. All Graces close and wither when Christ departs, as all fragrant flowers when the Sunne withdrawes his influence. And when these flowers wither in the soule, a man is a moving Dunghill, that stinkes in the nostrils of God and man, where ever he comes. A man that hath lost Christ may truely say as shee when the Arke was lost, *that his glory departed.* As the Sunne in the glory of the greater World, so Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse, is the glory of the lesser World, to wit; man.

Thou hast lost that in the world, that is the world, that is more worth then the world, and which all the world can never help the to. Thou hast lost that which would have the worst condition in this life. a Heaven; whereas the best without it is, but a hell. Thou hast lost that which would have beene to thy soule a continuall feast; whereas now thy soule is in a continuall famine and leanenesse. Thou hast lost thy spirits, and thy soul is in a dead palsie, so that thou art a living dead man, fit for no spirituall service. Thou hast lost thy head, thou hast lost thy eyes, thou hast lost thy hands, thou hast lost thy cloathing; nay, thou hast lost thy best father, thy best husband, thy best friend; all this, and much more comfort is Christ to man. Thou hast great reason then, O deserted soul, to lay to heart thy losse.

Lay to heart thy losse, this is comely, but doe not blame Christ from departing from thee, this is uncomely, and unrighteous. Uncomely; for it doth not suit with wisedomes children, to lay folly

to their Maker. Unrighteous, for thou constrain'st him to depart from thee, otherwise he had never left thee: thou didst sinne againe and againe of weakenesse, and yet Christ as a Comforter did not depart from thee, untill thou beganst to take *pleasure in unrighteousnesse*, and to make sinne a custome, *a right eye*, a very serviceable thing unto thee, Christ did not leave thee. Thou beganst to wax wanton against Christ, and then Christ cast thee off. Thou beganst to play the Apostate, and to backslide in heart from Christ; and then hee fell off from Christ; and then he fell off from thee, *and filled thee with thine owne wayes*. Now these things seriously considered, hast thou any cause to blame CHRIST for departing from thee? It is a comely and a very righteous thing for Wisedomes children to justifie wisedome in all his wayes, as to others so to our selves. Wherefore thus doe, O deserted soule; say, righteous art thou, O Christ, in departing from mee, and righteous mayst thou be, if thou never returne to me, so unkindly have I dealt with thee.

Then set thy selfe seriously to the use of all holy meanes, whereby thou maist get thy Comforter to returne to thee. Examine thy soule througly thou must, to finde out what evill depived thee of so great a good; and inserious soule-searching God will speak to thy conscience, and conscience will speake plainly to thee, and tell thee wherein thou didst give distaste to thy Comforter, and what was the cause he forsooke thy soule.

And when thou hast found out that evill, which conscience tels thee, deprived thee of so great a good, thou must fall very soule with it, how sweet soever

ſoever it hath been unto thee. Thy great work muſt be, to bring thy heart to a holy *revenge* upon this ſinne: to abhorre it, and thy ſelfe becauſe of *it*: and to become very vile, as *Iob* ſaith, and very low in thine owne eyes. Bring thy heart to admire the infinite patience and mercy of God, that things are no worſe with thy ſoul. That God had not cut thee off, in the acting of that ſin for which he deſerted thee: that hee hath left any place for repentance, and given the leaſt deſire to ſet about this work.

And when thou art come thus far; poſſibly the light of Gods countenance may begin now and then, to glance into thy ſoule, as at ſome little cranny: or at leaſt ſome more then ordinary lightſomneſſe may appear in thy dark dull ſoule, as there doth in the dark morning, ſome ſpace of time before the ſun appeares, that had left this Horizon. Now this beam of light, or this little lightſomneſſe of ſoule, thou muſt much admire; and acknowledge an unfathomed depth of love in it; that God ſhould ſo much as once ſtoope, to caſt an eye after thee more, to give thy ſoule the leaſt refreſhing, that did abuſe flagons of love.

By this glimpſe of light, or glimmering light, you are to ſtrengthen your faith in the beliefe of this; that light will more and more appeare, as the light of the morning unto the perfect day: and ſo conſequently to follow God with ſo much the more fervencie of prayer, for the return of his *wonted kindneſſe*. *Joſeph*, you know carried himſelf very roughly to his brethren which had abuſed him, for ſome ſpace of time and put them in great fear of the loſſe of their lives; told them they were *Spies*,

and many harſh words he gave them, and harſh lookes: but at laſt when his brethren had brought him to *Benjamin*, and diſcourſed a while, *Ioſephs* bowels began to worke, and hee could no longer with-hold his brotherly love, *Come near to mee, I pray you, I am Ioſeph your brother, &c.* Thus Chriſt our elder Brother deales with us, who doe unkindly and unbrotherly uſe him: hee will handle us very roughly, and put us in fear of the loſſe of our beſt lives: he will make our conſciences ſpeake bitter things againſt us; and let looſe the devill to tell us that we are *Spies*, hypocrites, and falſe friends to Chriſt: in this diſtracted, affrighted, perplexed ſtate, he may hold us many dayes, many weekes, many moneths; but hee cannot hold in his brotherly love alwayes, if we patiently bear his frownes, and kindly intreat him, and bring *Benjamin* to him, his owne blood and merits; this will make his bowels work; and make him unmask himſelfe and ſay, come neare to me, O mourning ſoules, toſſed and not comforted; I am Chriſt your elder Brother, whom yee unkindly uſed: in a little wrath I hid my face from you, but now with everlaſting kindneſſe will I embrace you.

Trinuni Deo gloria.

FINIS.

CHRISTS COMMVNION

With his Church *Millitant*.

2. Tim. 4. *verse* 22.

The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.

THis Text is *Pauls* ſweet affectionate farewell to *Timothy*. Many grave and gracious inſtructions *Paul* had given *Timothie*; but 'tis not much what man ſaith to the eare, as what Chriſt ſaith to the heart that workes effectually, to ſet man about his duty; and therefore doth *Paul* in the concluſion of all his Chriſtian counſell to *Timothy* pathetically pray, *That the Lord Ieſus Chriſt would be with his Spirit*.

The beſt teaching of man, is but as water ſpilt on the ground unleſſe Chriſt inwardly teach the ſpirit. If I am taught my duty by a *Paul*, one in gifts not inferiour to the chiefeſt Apoſtles, yet unleſſe Chriſt bee with my ſpirit, to make things take root there; all will die and wither, like good ſeed caſt into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* ſaw it but needfull, as to teach the eare, ſo to intreat the Lord to teach and ſtrengthen the ſpirit. *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit*.

There is a great distance (you know) betweene tke eare and the heart: it is an easie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no lesse then the almighty power of Christ, will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardnesse upon the heart of man naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant*: now though a child with his little finger, may make a dint upon dow, yet a Gyant with all his strength cannot make dints upon an *Adamant*; much lesse can all created strength, make divine impressions upon the spirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almighty strength to do thus, *The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy Spirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here, wish riches and honours and pleasures unto *Timothie*? Is the bare presence of Christ with a mans spirit such a blessing? To this I answer riches and honours, &c. They are *bona*, but not *optima*: good things, but not the best thing. Earthly things though good in themselves, yet are no further forth good to mee, then as the Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, to guide then it to use them; and therefore *Paul* as one truly wise, prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*; for that good which makes all other things worke together good, to wit, *That to have the Lord Iesus Christ with our spirits, is a prime and principall blessing.* *Paul* here wisheth it to *Timothy* as a cardinall blessing, *The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

Enucleatio propositionis.

To have Christ with our spirits, &c. How can Christ be present with man upon earth, who is now ascended, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven? The

The Apoſtle doth hint an anſwer to this queſtion, in the forme of his prayer, if you obſerve it. *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaith hee, be with thy ſpirit.* He ſpeakes of ſuch a preſence, as will fitly yeeld Communion and fellowſhip to the ſpirit of man. There is a double preſence of Chriſt with man, corporall and ſpirituall joyntly; or meerly ſpirituall. With juſt men made perfect in glory, Chriſt is corporally preſent; they behold his wounded body made a glorious body, as a continuall aſſurance of the Reſurrection of their owne vile bodies, unto the ſame ſimilitude. And with them Chriſt is preſent, ſpiritually filling them with thoſe joyes, the taſte of which upon earth, is called *unſpeakable and full of glory.* Of this communion ſpeaks Chriſt himſelf. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* Joh. 17. 23. As the ſoule is *tota in toto, & tota in qualibet parte:* according to the whole, in that whole which is leſſe noble then it ſelfe: according to the whole, that is, according to that full force and energy which the ſoul hath, it actuates and organizeth, every member of the body, the leaſt as well as the greateſt; So Chriſt in the miſticall body of Saints glorified, is as I may ſay, *Totus in toto, & totus in qualibet parte.* Whole Chriſt doth wholly exerciſe dominion in every glorified ſoul; hence it is, that all ſuch ſouls, are wholly holy, and wholly happy; that is perfectly holy, and perfectly happy: for as much as Chriſt, who is in the fulneſſe of his Fathers glory, is fully preſent with them.

Secondly, there is a preſence of Chriſt with man, meerly ſpirituall; that is, ſuch a preſence as whereby not the perſon, but the providence of Chriſt

Christ may be seen, Such a presence as *superiora* have with *inferiora*, not a *contiguall*, but a *vertuall* presence: a presence of influence and goverance, as the Sun hath with us by his rayes and beames. And this presence is either *Commune* or *Speciall*.

The Commune presence of Christ with man, is that whereby man is upheld and guided, according to the being of a rationall creature. Of this presence of Christ with man speakes the Apostle, *that they should seeke the Lord, if happily they might feele after him and finde him though he be not farre from every one of us for in him we live, move, and have our being*. Acts 17.27.28. Christ as an upholder of each creature, is not farre from every one of us: that is; hee is still present with us thus, and *with all Nations of men, which hee hath made of one blood, to dwell upon the face of the earth*. This presence of Christ with man therefore, cannot properly be called a *prime* and *principall blessing*, a choise and favour, because it is Commune to mankinde in generall; yea Commune to all creatures below man; for God is with all the works of his hands, to uphold every creature according to its proper species.

Secondly, there is a speciall presence of Christ with man which is that efficacious working of the Spirit of Christ, in the spirit of man; whereby it is made one spirit, with the Spirit of Christ, in willing and nilling, according to that of the Apostle, *Hee that is joyned to the Lord, is one Spirit*.

There is a speciall presence of Christ, with the bodies of men, for the good of them; which the *Psalmist* intimates where he saith, *That he knows our frame, and remembers that we are but dust: and that*

that the Angels of the Lord pitch their tents about the righteous. And *Iacob* found the truth of this by experience, when hee fled before *Esau*, and slept so sweetly upon a stone. But this tender and speciall presence and providence of Christ, respecting the outward man, is comprehended under the other, which respects the inward man, as *quid minus sub majori*, a lesse blessing under a greater. For if God be in a speciall manner present with my spirit, to guide and order that unto all Holy wayes, my spirit will command my body to walke in them too: and so consequently Christ cannot chuse, but be tenderly present with mee also, for the good of that, whilst every member thereof, is actuated by a spirit of His owne ordering, to his own honour, *as weapons of righteousnesse.* And therefore doth *Paul* (pithily, to speake much in few) silently passe over that, which is necessarily presupposed; praying, that Christ would be with *Timothies* spirit, and then he was sure, Christ would bee after a speciall manner present with his body too, for the good of that. *The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy spirit.* That is, *the Lord Iesus Christ exercise a speciall dominion in thy spirit, for the guiding and ordering of it, unto the avoyding of evill, and to the performing of all good, whereby Christ may have all the glory, due to his Name.*

Now that thus to have Christ present with a a mans spirit, is a prime and principall blessing; I will plainely demonstrate to you by a triple argument *ab effectu.*

Thus to have Christ present with our spirits, is the ready way to all temporall, spirituall, and eternall good: and therefore must needs be a prime and principall blessing. Thus

Thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is the ready way unto all temporall good. Men whose spirits, Christ doth after a speciall manner order, to avoide sinne, and to *keep themselves pure*, as *Paul* here useth the expression to *Timothy*, all temporall good things, so farre forth as may bee good for them, belong unto them by promise: *For godlinesse hath the promise of this life. It shall come to passe* (saith the Lord) *if you walke in my wayes, that I will blesse you in the fruit of the wombe, in the fruit of the field, in the basket and store, &c. If you walk in my wayes I will do this, &c.* Why, they with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, this is their *high way* (as *Solomon* saith) *to depart from evill*: that is; this is their daily endevour, to walke in all the waies of the Lord; and so consequently, all temporall good of right belongs unto them.

But you will say, how is it then, that those with whose spirits Christ is most present to make most tender for his honour, have usually least of all temporall good things?

To this the answer is easie and manifold. Men with whose spirits Christ is most present, to make them most tender to avoide sinne, and to keepe themselves pure, these the divell doth most of all maligne, and sets his limmes to *spoile them of their goods*. As the Author to the *Hebrewes* saith, to keepe them from that, which Christ would have them advanced to; or else to strip them of that, which Christ hath conferred on them, by imprisonment, banishment and the like; and so make such live in dens and holes, and caves of the earth; to wander in Deserts and Wildernesses, wearing sheep

ſheep skinnes, and goat-skinnes, whom the world is not worthy. Where a ſpirit of malice and confuſion rules, 'tis no marvell to ſee ſervants ſet on horſe-back, and Princes go on foot.

Secondly, men with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, he takes ſpeciall notice to what evill the ſpirit is moſt enclined, and ſo anſwerably gives of theſe outward things unto them. A wiſe Father hath his eye upon the diſpoſition of his child, and to what exorbitancie he findes him enclined, hee labours to prevent all occaſions to it, and ſo keeps his childe ſhort of what hee could otherwiſe liberally allow him. And thus 'tis with our heavenly Father, reſpecting his children: he eyes ſtrictly their ſpirits, and if hee ſee them inclined to pride, covetouſneſſe, or any other ſcandalous vice, he ſhortens them in that, which may foment theſe. At this (I thinke) *Iames* may point, where he ſaith, *Let the rich rejoyce in that he is made low.* Iam. 1. 10. God out of tender love to his children oft times makes them poore in purſe, that they may become poore in ſpirit, and ſo capable of the kingdom of heaven. Which rightly weighed, is not matter of ſorrow, but matter of joy, as *Iames* ſaith.

Thirdly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent to guide them to walke in his wayes, and to keepe themſelves pure; Chriſt doth prove them by poverty, as by other things: and hence it may come to paſſe; that Chriſtians very holy, may yet notwithſtanding be very deſtitute of the things of this life. Thus you know the Lord dealt with *Iob*. Chriſt was after a ſpeciall manner preſent with his Spirit, to guide him to

to walke uprightly above many in his time. Now to make knowne this to the world, to his owne glory, and *Iobs* eternall honour, he ſtript *Iob* of all, and ſet him upon a dunghill, who before ſat with the chiefeſt in ſeats of honour. God will have the world know, that thoſe with whoſe ſpirits hee is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, to guide and order them, are not as thoſe with whoſe ſpirits the divell is in a ſpeciall manner preſent, to guide and order; to wit, ſuch as will winde and turne every way when put to it.

Laſtly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, they deſire but little of the things of this life; and therefore 'tis no marvell, to ſee Chriſtians very holy, yet not very wealthy. Chriſtians with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, they only deſire daily bread; *Agurs* portion, food convenient; and this the Lord gives them, and with this they are contented, which is the only wealthy eſtate, Chriſtians, with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, *they hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe*, not after riches in the world: they *covet the beſt guifts*, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, and not the fading riches of this life. Now Chriſt applies himſelfe, to be moſt liberall in the diſtribution of that, which the ſpirits of men moſt bend after; in mercy, or in juſtice. Chriſtians whoſe ſpirits moſt ſtrongly bend after grace; to Theſe Chriſt in mercy doth moſt bountifully apply himſelfe to give grace; according to that of Chriſt, *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, for they ſhall be filled.* Chriſtians whoſe ſpirits moſt ſtrongly bend after wordly riches,

to

to theſe oft times Chriſt in juſtice moſt liberally applyes himſelfe to give thoſe, according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure.* According likewiſe to that of *Solomon, There is a ſore evill which I have ſeene under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt:* Pſal. 17. 11. Eccleſ. 5. 13. The objection being thus anſwered the argument is ſtill of force. That to have Chriſt with our ſpirits, is the way to all temprall good, and ſo conſequently, *a prime and principall bleſſing.*

But that I may yet more fully ſpeake in this argument, note that temporall good, is either poſitive, or privative; (if I may for illuſtrations ſake ſo diſtinguiſh.) Temporall good in a poſitive ſenſe, is that ſecular thing, which is in ſelfe good; as bread, and cloathing, and the like, of which wee have already ſpoken.

Temporall good privatively ſo called, is affliction ordered to a mans good, which in it ſelfe is not ſo. Now all thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is preſent, are partakers of this temporall good. All outward croſſes tend to their inward gaine, becauſe Chriſt is with their ſpirits. For all outward troubles are heavier or lighter, more hurtfull or more profitable ſtill to a man as Chriſt is pleaſed to order his Spirit under them. A little outward trouble, if Chriſt let it ſeize upon a mans ſpirit he quickly ſinks and dyes under his burthen, according to that of the Apoſtle, *worldly ſorrow cauſeth death.* The loſſe of a wife or husband; nay, the loſſe of a child or friend; nay, the loſſe of the leaſt outward content, if Chriſt ſtand a looſe from a mans ſpirit, and let it faſten upon him, he

he will soone languish, and bleed inwardly to death; whereas all outward afflictions, meeting together upon the outward man, if Christ be with the spirit, to support and beare up that, a Christian sweetly submits, and keeps on his, according to to that of the Apostle, *Rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer*: Rom. 12. 12. Now Christ tenderly watches, when outward troubles begin to take hold of that Spirit, with whom hee is specially present, and then hee quickly releeves and eases it; and not only so, but sanctifies, it, to the drawing of such a spirit nearer to God in love, according to that of *David*, Psal. 116. 1.2. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voyce, and my supplications, because hee hath inclined his eare unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live*. Adde this to the former, that to have Christ with our spirits; is the ready way to all temporall good, whether *positive*, or *privative*; and you must needs grant it to be a principall blessing.

Secondly, those with whose spirits Christ is specially present, are in the ready way to all spirituall good: and therefore thus to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted a principall blessing. Christ is the author and worker of all grace; and therefore such spirits must needs be very gracious with whom Christ is. *The places are holy whereunto the Ark of the Lord hath come*, saith *Solomon*, 2. Chron. 8. 11. I may truly say it of Christ, which the ark typified. The spirits are holy with whom Christ is, and where holy Christ comes. They are at the well-head for holinesse, which have holy Christ with their spirits. They

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of heavenly wisdome as Christ is. With him are all the treasures of wisdome. Hee that lyes in thy bosome, teaching thee wisdome secretly, came out of the very bosome of the Almighty, and knowes all things; and he gives such an unction to that Spirit which he teaches, that hee makes it know and discerne all things too.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of love, which is the glory of all graces, in the sight of God and man; for there is no such worker and winner of love, as Christ is. If hee doe but *put in his finger by the hole of the doore*, hee will make a mans bowels melt after him. If hee doe but reveale his love to our spirits a little; our spirits grow sick of love unto him. He will wound us with one of his eyes, so full of beauty is hee. Let a mans spirit be never so cold; yet if Christ be with it, he is in the ready way to burn with love to Christ, as strong as death, which many waters cannot quench.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of joy and consolation: they are in the ready way to joy *unspeakable and full of glory. These things have I spoken unto you, &c.* said Christ to his Disciples. Christ speaks such things to the spirits of those with whom he is present, as fills their spirits with joy, to the very brim; and this oft times in the very depth of all outward extremity. The Church doth darkly hint this. *The Comforter which should releeve my soule is far from me:* Lam. 1. 16. As if the Church had said, though my outward misery

be exceeding great, yet if the Comforter did but keep close to my spirit, I should have as much consolation as my heart could hold, in the midst of all my misery: but this is my misery, that the Comforter which should releeve my soule is far from mee: out of the hearing of sighs and groans: nay, out of the hearing of strong cryes; *he is angry against my prayers.* In a word a Christian which hath Christ with his spirit, is in the ready way to *excell in virtue*, as *David* sayes: to excell in all vertue; to be wiser than his teachers; more excellent in all grace than his neighbours. And therefore, to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted and called, *A prime and principall blessing.*

Lastly, to have Christ with our spirits, is the ready way unto eternall good; and therefore a principall blessing. As a stone carries with it, whatsoever light thing be fastened to it, unto its own center; so Christ whose proper place of residence is Heaven, carries with him thither, all such spirits as to whom he is united on earth. If we have a speciall friend at Court, we count that we are in a ready way to see all the pomp of the Prince. Christ hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell; hee opens and no man shuts; shuts, and no man can open: all with whose spirits he hath dwelt, and been kindly used upon earth, hee knowes; and when they shall knock at those everlasting gates, hee will open and let them into every roome in his royall dwelling and shew them all the glory which he had with his Father before the world was, 'Tis betweene Christ and that spirit with whom he lives, as betweene *Naomi* and *Ruth*: where

where the one lives the other will. Whileſt ſuch ſpirits live in the body, Chriſt will live with them there; when they remove out of the body, Chriſt will not leave them (*death cannot ſeparate*) but commands his Angels to bring them to eternall manſions with himſelfe. Chriſt which is lifted up to glory himſelfe, will draw up all ſuch unto him, as in whoſe ſpirits hee dwels, and no ſtrength ſhall bee able to withſtand him; none ſhall pluck ſuch out of his hand. *Vnio cum Chriſto, eſt unie inumibilis.*

If to have Chriſt with our ſpirits bee a grand favour, not to have him with our ſpirits, muſt needs be a grand evill. A ſpirit without Chriſt is naked, as a body without cloaths. Many things may make cloathing and defence for the body, but only Chriſt that *beſt garment* as the Father of the Prodigall cals him, can make cloathing and munition for the ſoule. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is as a naked body amongſt thornes, every thorne pierceth, and every bryar ſcratcheth, and fetcheth bloud from ſuch a body; ſo worldly cares and worldly feares, when ſtrong, will pierce ſuch a naked ſpirit thorow and thorow, and make him run mad, if God (unſought) doe not ſeaſonably ſtep in and bridle the Bedlam. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is as a naked body amongſt Serpents; every ſerpent ſtings and venoms ſuch a naked body to death; ſo every ſeed of the Serpent ſtings and poyſons to death ſuch naked ſoules by their threatnings, flatteries, examples, and the like. a mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is as a naked body in great blaſts of lightning; ſuch bodies are ſuddenly ſcorcht and conſumed; ſo ſuch naked ſoules are

ſuddenly blaſted, by the fiery darts of the Devill, and ſo ſuddenly oft times goe from burning to burning; from burning in ſin, to burning in Hell.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not only naked, but blind too. A naked man having his ſight, may make ſome ſhift; but a man naked and blind too; is in a miſerable helpleſſe ſtate indeed: and juſt ſuch is the ſtate and condition of every mans ſpirit, that hath not Chriſt with it: for as the Sun in the Heavens is the eye and light of the greater world; ſo the Sun of righteouſneſſe Chriſt, is the eye and light of the leſſer world, man. Now doe but imagine what a dark dolorous condition wee ſhould all be in, if the Sun were darkened or had utterly forſaken our Horizon; or do but think of that darkneſſe, which was upon the Ægyptians for a little time, when no man could ſtir out of his place; and ſuch and much worſe is the dark dolorous condition of a ſpirit without Chriſt, not able to ſee the leaſt beame of ſaving light, not able to ſtir a ſtep out of his place, in the way that leads to life.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not onely blind, but dumb too. A man that is blind, yet if hee can ſpeake, can beg for that which hee cannot ſee to worke for. But when a man is blinde, and dumb too, that hee can neither help himſelfe, nor beg of others, hee is in a dolefull condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the condition of every mans ſpirit that hath not Chriſt with it. For as Chriſt is Eyes to the ſoule, ſo he is a Mouth and Tongue, enabling to cry *Abba Father*. Vnleſſe the ſpirit of Chriſt be with our ſpirits, helping our infirmities who are godly; we are dumb, and not able to ſpeak to our owne

owne Father, as adopted children for daily bread; much more unable to beg for life, to the dreadfull Judge of all the world, muſt all ungodly perſons needs be, whoſe ſpirits are altogether without Chriſt, as an helper. I would have all men that live in their ſins, think ſeriouſly of this; when Chriſt as the dreadfull Judge of all the world at the great day ſhall ask you, what you have to ſay for your ſelves that you ſhould not eternally dye for your ſins, in which you have lived, you will bee like that man which was without his wedding garment, dumb and not able to ſay a word for your ſelves, becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. 'Tis impoſſible that a mans owne guilty ſpirit ſhould be able to look the terrible Judge of men and Divels in the face, much leſſe ſpeake a word for mercy, unleſſe the Almighty Spirit of Chriſt be with it, to aid it. Many ignorant wretches ſooth themſelves with this, that they will at laſt cry, Lord, Lord and ſo prevaile quickly for pardon with him, is infinite in mercy, Why but think on this, O ignorant ſoule! *No man can call Jeſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Thou wilt not in thy greateſt need be able to cry Lord, Lord, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit. Death will ſting thee, conſcience will gnaw thee, Chriſt will condemne thee, Devils will teare thee; and yet wilt not thou bee able to cry, Lord, Lord, have mercy on me, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit: but in ſtead of crying, Lord, Lord, for mercy, thou wilt burne in malice againſt the Lord, and curſe and blaſpheme as Devils and damned wretches doe. Haſt thou never ſeen condemned wretches, not only dumb; but withall, deſperate too: and leap of the ladder

themſelves, without either asking God or man forgiveneſſe? Thus in a ſpirituall ſenſe, and much worſe, wilt thou doe in the great day of judgement, for as much as Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit.

Fourthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not only blind and dumb but deafe too. And if a man be blind and dumb, yet if hee can heare, he may make ſome ſhift to help himſelfe: we follow a thing (we know) ſometimes by the ſound, when wee cannot ſee it, nor ſpeak what it is: but when a man is naked, blind, dumb, and deafe too, hee is in a helpleſſe condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the ſtate of a mans ſpirit without Chriſt. For Chriſt, as he is Eyes and Toungue ſo he is Eares alſo to the ſoule of man. Hence it is that *Iohn* ſpeaks ſo frequently of ſpirituall hearing, after a *Hypotheticall* manner: *Hee that hath an eare, &c.* That is, if any man have ſpirituall diſcerning, *Let him heare what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches.* Intimating that a ſpirituall eare is a very rare thing to be found, that which no man hath, but hee which hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, that hath had his eares *bored* by the Spirit of Chriſt, as the Scripture ſpeaks; all others are as deafe as Adders and cannot heare the voyce of the Charmer, charme he never ſo wiſely. I would have all that live in their ſins, ſeriouſly conſider this too, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You tell us that you will turne from your ſins hereafter, and obey the call of God in the Miniſtry of his Word: but let mee aske you this; Have you not hitherto turned the deafe eare upon God? Yes: I and ſo you will doe for the time to come; and the reaſon of both the the ſame; becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits.

Let

Let mercies call, corrections call; let friends call, father call, mother call, husband call, wife call; let Miniſters call, conſcience call; nay, let Chriſt himelſe call, in what voyce he will, ſtill voyce, or lowd voyce, in words never ſo pleaſing, or never ſo piercing, yet wilt not thou heare, becauſe Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit; but with *Salomons* foole wilt on in thy ſins, and be eternally puniſhed.

Fifthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is without *feeling*, in a dead palſie all over, which how dolorous ſuch a ſtate is, in a corporall ſenſe, you know; much more dolorous in a ſpirituall ſenſe, I am ſure. As the ſpirit of man can neither ſee, ſpeake, nor hear, ſo neither can it feele, without the Spirit of Chriſt. The ſpirit of man without the Spirit of Chriſt, is dead. Chriſt is to our ſpirits, as our ſpirits are unto our bodies, their life; and life is the principle of feeling: for the dead feele nothing. *When Chriſt which is our [life] ſhall appeare, &c.* Where there is no Chriſt there is no life; and where there is no life, there is no feeling. You know the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome that were *paſt feeling*, having *given themſelves over to laſciviouſneſſe, to worke all uncleanneſſe with greedineſſe.* There the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſuch a ſenſleſneſſe, as lies upon the ſoule by a ſecond act of divine juſtice. All humane ſpirits by the firſt act of divine juſtice upon *Adam*, are naturally paſt feeling, and would give up themſelves unto all wickednes with greedines did not God reſtraine. To be paſt feeling in this latter ſenſe, notes principally a want of divine affection; when ſinne doth not kindly affect the ſoule with ſorrow; as in the former ſenſe, when ſinne doth not at all affect the ſoule with

ſorrow : when holy wayes and works doe not kindly affect the ſoule with joy ; as in the other ſenſe, when they doe not affect the ſoule with joy at all ; but rather diſturbe and provoke to paſſion and malice.

I would have all that live in their ſinnes, ſeriouſly thinke on this alſo, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You have heard many powerfull Sermons, which you have ſeen worke admirably upon others, and yet they have made no impreſſion upon your ſpirits ; and many hundred more may you heare, & no divine impreſſion at laſt be made; and the reaſon of both, one and the ſame ; becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits ; and by reaſon of this, your hearts are as Adamants, which every ſtroke hardens, but not breaks it. Let the maſter ſmite, and the man ſmite ; let God ſmite, and his Miniſter ſmite, and conſcience ſmite ; nay, let every member of the body be ſmitten with puniſhment, to affect the ſoule with ſinne, yet will it not ſtir and complaine, unleſſe Chriſt be with it.

Finally, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is without taſting or ſmelling : to theſe ſenſes alſo (you know) the Scripture doth allude, and therefore fitly here may I, to ſet forth fully, the unhappy condition of every ſpirit without Chriſt. You know the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſome, *that ſavoured not the things of God* ; which is a tearme applyed in Scripture, to the ſenſe of ſmelling as well as to the ſenſe of taſting, and therefore for brevity ſake do I here joyne both ſenſes together, in a Spirituall way of alluſion. Why all that have not Chriſt with their ſpirits, are ſuch as cannot rightly *ſavour ſpirituall things* ; ſuch *put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

I would have all you that live in your ſins, ſeriouſly thinke on this too, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You come oft times to Wiſedomes home, and though ſhee prepare you all Spirituall dainties, yet you can reliſh nothing, but ſome by things, that lie about the diſh, rather for ornament, then for food. And would you know the reaſon of this? 'tis becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. If Chriſt were with you, you would feed on every diſh at Wiſedomes table, on promiſes, yea, and on threatnings too: *To the hungry ſoule, every bitter thing is ſweet*, ſaith *Solomon*. All that is good and wholeſome goes down well, where Chriſt is with the Spirit. You come frequently to Wiſedomes houſe, who keeps a Table here and 'twere for a King, and yet you have leane ſhrivel'd ſoules, like men in a conſumption: every one tels you, that you look as if you were ſtarved, ſpeake and live, as if you never heard a good Sermon from yeers end, to yeers end: they tell you that you are ſo leane and feeble, that you need the benefit of all the ſpirits, that every diſh at Wiſdomes table can yeeld, to ſtrengthen you, and recover you, and yet every diſh almoſt goes againſt your ſtomacks; and that you doe eat, is without ſavour or any other vertue, and ſo you languiſh with all dainties before you; and thus you will goe on languiſhing, untill you quite conſume and periſh eternally, unleſſe Chriſt be with your ſpirits.

You ſee (I ſuppoſe) plainly by this time, that as it is a prime and principall happineſſe to have Chriſt with our ſpirits; ſo it is a prime and principall evill and unhappineſſe, not to have Chriſt with our ſpirits. Wherefore having laid open both before

before you, let me entreat you all to look in upon your spirits.and see who keeps company with them Christ or the divell; one of these two is with all our spirits. If Christ be not with our spirits, the devill is and will be. If Christ be with your spirits, according to the sense and meaning of the Apostle in my text, you shall find it by these two things, *the body is dead because of sin; and the spirit is life because of righteousnesse.* 'Tis *Pauls* Character of Christs speciall presence in the soul of man upon earth, and therefore of strong authority. *And if Christ be in you, the bodie is dead because of sins but the spirit is life because of righteousnesse.* Rom.8.10. The body is dead because of sinne: that is, the body of corruption is destroyed, as in respect of the guilt of it, so in respect of the dominion of it. And *the spirit is life because of righteousnesse*: that is, the regenerate part is *vigorous*, in reference to all righteous wayes.

And if therefore you would know whether Christ be with your spirits, see whether your bodies be dead because of sinne: whether you labour to bring *every thought into subjection to Christ*; or whether you doe not *allow* your selves liberty to some evill, out of love to some pleasure or profit; which is that principally, wherein the dominion of sinne consisteth; as *Paul* hints unto us, where he saith, *The evill which I doe, I allow not.* That is, I doe not approve of it in my heart, nor plead for it with my tongue; but strive against it with all my strength; and it would be more joy to me, to be rid of it, then if I had a Kingdome conferred to mee. This is the language right, of one that hath Christ with his spirit.

Secondly

Secondy, see whether your *spirits be alive because of righteousnesse*, if you would know whether Christ be with your spirits or not. See whether holy wayes doe heartily affect you. I rejoyced when they said, Come let us goe to the house of the Lord, saith the *Psalmist*. He spake like a man, having Christ indeed with his spirit: his spirit leapt within him, like the babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when they spake of drawing neere to God, in the duties of his worship. A Christian that hath Christ with his spirit, sees a taking transcendant beauty in all Wisdoms wayes; *they are all wayes of pleasure, and pathes of peace*; which is spoken in reference to such as have Christ with their spirits: for others finde no such thing in them. And his spirit opens in them like flowers in the Sunne, and smells fragrantly, he bends and cleaves to them, in love to that souls sweetnesse, which he findes in them. And if you finde these things in you, I thinke I may safely tell you to your comfort, that Christ is with your spirits.

I may turne this Character into another form, as *Paul* doth, and tell you in his words, that *he which is joyned to the Lord is one spirit*. 1. Cor 6. 17. They that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ. This expression (I conceive) is something explained by these following words; *And the multitude of them that beleeved, were of one heart and one soule*: Acts 4. 32. or as the originall hath it ἡ καρδία καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μία, *heart and soul one*: They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ. They doe *idem velle, & idem nolle*, What Christ loves, they love; and what Christ hates they hate. Christ loves righteousnesse, and

and hates iniquity: *Thou hast loved righteousnesse, and hated iniquity, &c.* Psal.45.7. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this. They love righ eousneſſe, that is, all righteous wayes: and hate iniquity; that is all that Gods word condemnes, 'Twas Christs meat and drink, to do his Fathers will; they that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ in this. *'Tis joy to the just to doe judgement*, saith *Solomon*. Christ was tender about keeping the least Commandement, as well as about keeping the greatest. *Whosoever shall breake one of the least Commandements, and teach men so, hee shall be called the least in the Kingdome of heaven.* Mat.5.19. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this; they are tender to keep all Gods Commandements: least, as well as greatest. *So shall I not be confounded, whil'st I have respect unto all thy Commandements*, saith *David*. I doe not conceive the place fore-cited so, as if Christ did account of one part of his Fathers will above another: I rather thinke that hee there speakes *Pharisæorum more*, in the Pharises dialect, who would make the world beleeve, that they mightily laboured to keepe some precepts, but others they thought, as many of us now do, that they need not to be so strict about. Now Christs tender Spirit for his Fathers honour, could not brooke this halting in Religion; and they that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this. That Commandement which the most say is one of the *least*, and may bee dispensed withall; or at least need not to bee so strictly look't unto; that,

as

as well as any other, whil'ſt a precious part of Chriſts will, a man that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, will be tender to obſerve. *Davids* ſpirit ſmote him, for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, as well for cutting off the life of *Vriah*: which plainly ſhewes, that men which have Chriſt with their ſpirits are tender about the avoiding of ſmall ſins, as well as great.

Now poſſibly ſome of you by what hath been ſaid, may ſee, that as yet you have not Chriſt with your ſpirits; I ſhall addreſſe my ſelfe in the firſt place, particularly to ſpeake to you, and then in the ſecond place, I ſhall addreſſe my ſelfe, particularly to ſpeake to ſuch of you, as have, by what hath beene ſaid, diſcerned that Chriſt is indeed with your ſpirits. To you which by what hath been ſaid, ſee, that as yet Chriſt is not with your ſpirits; I have onely theſe two things to ſay, labour to bewaile your great want, as perſons, deeply ſenſible of it; and then labour to get this great want ſpeedily ſupplied.

Firſt, labour to bewaile your great want, as perſons deeply affected with it. 'Tis the greateſt want in the World, to want Chriſt to be with a mans ſpirit. Other wants may be afflicting wants, but this is a damning want. Other wants may make thee deſpiſed of men, but this want will make thee for ever to be abhor'd of God. Thou were better want riches, thou were better want honours; nay, thou were better want bread to put in thy head, then want Chriſt to be in thy heart. Thou were better want thy deere Husband, thy ſweet Wife, to lie in thy boſome, then want Chriſt to lie there. Nay, thy ſoule were better

ter to be without thy body, then without Christ. If there bee any want under heaven, that makes a hell to a man upon earth, it is this; to want Christ to be with his spirit. For what is it that makes hell, hell? a place full of sin and full of misery? but this; that Christ is not with those spirits: they are spirits everlastingly excluded, from all comunion with Christ. Now whereas great wants, make you complaine heavily, and mourne bitterly, beg the Lord to make these things sinke into your spirits, that you may be sensible of this great want of wants, that your spirits are without Christ, and so without God in this world; that so all sorrow for others wants, may meet and runne in one channell, to bewaile this great want. *Sauls* speech to his servant, I may here fitly allude too. *Come let us returne* (said he) *lest my Father leave caring for the Asses, and take thought for us.* If you that mourne for this want, and that want: did but feel the want of Christ with your spirits; you would with *Kish* quickly leave mourning for trifles, and begin to mourne for things of waight. Come, O my soule! cease mourning for father and mother; cease mourning for husband and wife, for children and substance; and begin to mourne for this that thou yet livest Christlesse, and art in the ready way to die and perish remedilesse.

When you have got your hearts to bleed inwardly, under your great want; then cry mightily to the Lord, and supply it. And to make your prayers prevalent, urge the promise of God, wherein hee hath ingaged himselfe to doe good in Christ, to them that are *afarre off*. Thy soule thou findest farre off from Christ: why, the promise (saith

ſaith the Apoſtle) of Chriſt and ſalvation by him is to ſuch. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are* [*a far off*] This *Peter* ſpake by way of comfort, as now I doe, to ſuch as felt their ſpirits without Chriſt; without grace and hope of glory. Chriſt you ſee is under a generall promiſe, and therefore no ſoule ſhould deſpaire of obtaining him. Hee is promiſed to the Jews, and not onely to them, but to us Gentiles, who *ſometimes were afarre off*, not to this Gentile or that, but to all that are prickt in heart for the want of him. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are afarre off.* Let every one therefore upon this ground; that feeles his ſpirit prickt and wounded, for want of Chriſt; take words to himſelfe, and goe unto God, and ſay.

O God! my ſoul is a poor Chriſtleſſe ſoul. I finde by wofull experience, that the Lord Ieſus is not with my ſpirit, by reaſon of which I live wickedly to thy diſhonour, and ſhall, I know not how ſoone, die miſerably, to mine owne eternall undoing, if thou doe not ſhew mercy upon mee, according to thy promiſe. Thou haſt ſaid that thou wilt beſtow Chriſt, grace and ſalvation, upon them that are afar off; make good thy gracious promiſe to me, whoſe ſpirit is far from Chriſt, grace and all good; ſo ſhalt thou oblige mee for ever unto thee: and I ſhall tell of thy goodneſſe as long as I live.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit, to ſuch as finde by what was formerly delivered, that Chriſt is not with their ſpirits; I ſhall in the next place ſpeake unto you, that by what was formerly delivered

delivered, finde, that Christ is with your spirits. Something by way of counsell, and something by way of Consolation, I have to deliver unto you. Three things by way of counsell, I would commend unto you: *thankefully acknowledge this great favour; carefully preserve it; and industriously labour to augment it.*

First, thankfully acknowledge this great favour. 'Tis a pearle of great price, that God hath cast into thy bosome, to give Christ to be with thy spirit: and for great favours, every one will acknowledge it very fit, and just, that they should bee thankfull. 'Tis a jewell that Christ scarce gives to one of ten thousand: and for rare gifts, every one will readily confesse it to be great ingratitude, not thankfully to acknowledge them. Doest thou not heare some swear, some curse, some lie, like their father the devill? Why thou wouldest have beene such an one, had not God given Christ to bee with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some drunkards, some whoremasters, some murderers, some persecutors of the Saints? Why thou would'st have been such an one, if God had not given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some make a God of their belly, some make a God of their wealth; some proud, some mad, some putting far from them the evill day, living as if they should never die? Why, thou wouldest have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some *Nabals*, some *Iezabels*, some *Cains*, some *Demases*, some *Iudases*? Why, amongst the number of these wouldest thou have been, had not God given Christ to bee with thy spirit. Wherefore magnifie the Lord with all

all thy might, and let all that is within thee praiſe his holy Name. Thinke but how it was with thee, when thy ſpirit was without Chriſt. How *fooliſh thou waſt ſerving divers luſts* : how the God of this world which rules mightily in the children of d ſobedience did rule mightily in thee. How weak thy ſpirit was, and eaſily overcome and carried captive of every luſt. How drunken thy ſpirit was and reel'd from one opinion to another; one day thou thought'ſt thus and thus, and another day thou thought'ſt quite contrary. I ſay, do but think of theſe things, and how the Lord might juſtly have left thee ſtill, to have gone on thus, untill thou hadſt periſhed as hee hath done many thouſands, and then be unthankfull for the communion of Chriſt with thy ſpirit, if thou canſt. It was this conſideration that ſet *Paul* a wondring at the goodneſſe of the Lord. *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutour, &c. yet I obtained mercy.* Hee circumflexes this terme [*I*] *yet* [*I*] *obtained mercy &c.* It was wonderfull in his eye, that God ſhould give Chriſt to dwell with ſuch a bloudy blaſpheming ſpirit, as he had. In this way let us goe to work, to raiſe our dull ſpirits, to magnifie the free goodneſſe of the Lord :for 'tis a work of all works, that God loves: I was a man of a very proud, paſſionate, malicious, uncleane ſpirit; and yet I obtained mercy. God hath given Chriſt to be with this depraved ſpirit, and in a little time hee hath done very much, and made a manifeſt change in my ſpirit: of very proud, he hath made it in ſome meaſure humble; of very paſſionate in ſome meaſure patient; of very malicious, in ſome meaſure loving; of very uncleane, in ſome meaſure con-

tinent. O! the rich of his love *how unsearchable is his mercy, and his love past finding out?*

Secondly, as I would have you thankfully acknowledge this great favour, so I would have you carefully labour to preserve it. You find that you have Christ with your spirits, take heed you do not lose him. Thou wert better lose thy life, than lose the speciall presence of Christ with thy spirit. 'Tis a prime and principall blessing, as thou hast heard; a blessing of more than this world; nay, of more worth than thy soule, which Christ values above the world. Now choyce things, wee are usually very carefull of, and keep them choycely. Christ totally (I know) can no man lose, which hath him after a speciall manner present with his spirit: but according to some prime and principall operations, hee may: according to others, very far, though not totally. A man may lose the presence of Christ with his spirit totally, as a Comforter. *The Comforter which should releeve my soule, is far from me*, saith *Ieremiah* Lam. 1. 16. in the person of the afflicted Church. 'Tis probable enough, that *Davids* spirit was thus stript of Christ by his dolorous complaints, which frequently we read of. *Is his mercy cleane gone for ever? doth his promise faile for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath hee in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will hee be favourable no more?* Psa. 77. 7. 8. 9. Some carriages in Christians towards Christ make Christ totally alter his carriage towards them; though for his promise sake, hee will never totally remove himselfe from them.

As when Christians doe not keep their watch strictly

ſtrictly againſt ſin, in all the occaſions of it; then Chriſt, in ſtead of being a Comforter, becomes a convincer; and in ſtead of ſpeaking ſweet things, hee ſpeaks very bitter unto the ſoule. This was the caſe of *David* and *Peter*. Or when Chriſtians are careleſſe, and ſluggiſh, to maintaine and encreaſe their ſweet communion with Chriſt, unyeelding to the ſweet motions of the ſpirit of Chriſt, and turning ofttimes the deafe eare againſt the ſtill voyce behind them, which ſaith, *this is the way, walk in it*. There Chriſt drawes a curtaine between the ſpirit of man and himſelfe, and leaves the ſpirit of man in the dark, and full of feares. This is notably illuſtrated by that language of the Spouſe, *It is the voyce of my Beloved that knocketh, ſaying; Open to mee, my Siſter, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night*. The Church was convinced of this, that it was her Beloved, ſeeking neerer communion with her, and yet obſerve how ſhe replyes. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them; I opened to my Beloved but my Beloved had withdrawne himſelfe and was gone; my ſoule failed when he ſpake; I ſought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no anſwer:* Cant 5. You that find the preſence of Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a Comforter, make Chriſtian uſe of what I have ſaid, that you may ſtill enjoy ſo great a mercy. And if you loſe the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as a Comforter to your ſpirits, miſerable comforters will all other things prove unto you. You will mourne, and none will be able to comfort you, if Chriſt as a Comforter forſake your ſpirits.

Secondly, as a leader, a man may very far loſe the co nmunion of Chriſt with his ſpirit. As if a Chriſtian take liberty to ſin againſt that light, which Chriſt hath ſet up in his ſpirit; this will make Chriſt firſt or laſt (if not timely lookt unto) leave a man to his owne underſtanding, to ſteare his courſe; and then will ſuch a man declare himſelfe quickly, to be a foole and a beaſt, in many points, as *David* ſaith Have you not ſeene Chriſtians of great light erre in judgement and erre in practice? Whence comes this weakneſſe, but from hence that Chriſt as a leader ſtands aloofe from their ſpirits? which is a plaine demonſtration that a man may loſe the preſence of Chriſt with his ſ irit, as a leader. *David* (I beleeve) found the truth of this, as well as of the former, by wofull experience. A man may collect ſo much cleerly from his owne words. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence and take not thy holy ſpirit from mee:* Pſal. 5. 11. The ſpirit of God is therefore called by *David a holy* Spirit, becauſe holy in himſelfe (the Spirit of the holy God, as hee ſaid to *Daniel*) but principally here, as I conceive, *Ab officio*: becauſe the worker of holineſſe in us, *David* doubtleſſe by his fall, found an exceeding weakneſſe in his Spirit unto all good, over what formerly hee did, and ſtrong propenſitie again to erre; as every act of ſin leaves ſeed and ſpawn upon the ſpirit, to bring forth more to cover the firſt, or to commit the like againe. But more then all this; hee found Chriſt to ſtand aloof from his ſpirit; not exerciſing that ſpeciall dominion in his ſpirit, as before for the ſubduing of luſt, and ſuggeſting of holy motions and deſires; but leaving him

him as it were to himſelfe, as one with whom hee would have no more to do. And therefore doth *David* ſo dolefully complaine *Caſt mee not away from thy preſence, and take not thy [holy] Spirit from mee*: you therefore which finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a tender leader, take heed of ſinning againſt any part of that light, which he ſets up in your underſtandings, or againſt any motions of his ſpirit. which he ſuggeſts unto you; leſt he leave you to your owne light, and to your owne ſtrength: and then will you run from leſſe ſins to greater, from one ſinne to another, like *David* and *Peter*, to the ſcandalizing of the Goſpel, and the deſperate wounding of your own ſouls.

The third and laſt thing that I would commend unto you, by way of counſell, is this: labour to augment this great favour. You finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, labour induſtriouſly, to have Chriſt more and more with your ſpirits. 'Tis a prime and principall bleſſing, as you have heard, to have Chriſt with your ſpirits; therefore labour to get as much of this favour and happineſſe as poſſibly you can. Thou haſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit as a teacher; why thou maiſt have him yet more intimate with thee, and open unto thee, in imparting divine myſteries, if thou *follow on to know*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, if thou humbly forget, and looke over all thou haſt, and preſſe hard after more: the things thou kneweſt not, Chriſt will teach thy ſpirit, morning by morning, as by the learned Chiſt hath taught thy ſpirit many truths, why, he will *lead thy ſpirit into all truth*. if thou urge his promiſe and beleeve. He will *fill thee with the knowledge of his will in all wiſedome and ſpirituall*

understanding, If thou pray for it as *Paul* did for the *Colossians*.

Thou findest Christ with thy spirit as a Comforter; why thou maist have yet much more consolation from him, if thou study to be more pliable to him. Thou hast Christ distilling drops of consolation into thy spirit, now and then; why thou maist have Christ powring in flagons of love into thy soule, filling thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory, if thou bring thy spirit to be more lowly and meek; for such finde most *rest to thier soules*: if thou carefully keep *comming to Christ still* in every pressure of spirit; for such finde most *ease*: that is renewing faith still, as thou renewest thy sinnes.

Thou findest Christ with thy spirit, as a quickner and strengthner to dutie; why thou maist finde him yet more mighty with thy spirit this way, if thou powre out thy spirit often with *David* for quickning grace; and if thou more deny thine owne strength, and cast thy selfe more upon his. Could we but attain *Pauls* height in self-deniall, to be nothing in our selves (*though I am nothing* saith he) we should find Christ gloriously present still with our spirits, and be more constant in zeal and strength to every good worke, then we are, I conclude this thus, be so tractable to Christ, that thou maist with *Mary* win upon Christ still; and thinke that thou canst never be neer enough to him nor intimate enough with him; and this is the ready way, to have a heaven upon earth: for the more wee get Christ to be with our spirits, the more truly may we be said to be in heaven.

The last thing that I have to say to you, that finde

finde Christ with your spirits, is matter of consolation. Here is comfort for you against famine. When thy body wants food, Christ that is with thy spirit, will give that meat to eat, which the world knows not of; so that when others repine, and *curse God and their King* in their extremity, as the Prophet speakes; thou shalt bee patient in prayer to him, who can command Ravens to bring thee bread and flesh to feed on; and will, rather then thou shalt starve, if thy life may be more to his glory, then thy death.

Here's comfort for you against the sword. In the midst of all troubles ond fears, Christ that is with thy spirit will bear thee up admirably. What is the face of an enemy to terrifie; if Christ be with thy spirit. What is the spoiling of thy goods? nay, what is the spoiling of thy body? if Christ bee with thy soule. A Mountaine of misery, is but as a Mole-hill, if Christ support the spirit. To thinke of the Sword is a naked reference to flesh and blood, and so nothing is more terrible: but let us that feare the Lord thinke of it, in reference to Christ that is with our spirits, aud then wee shall not bee troubled, though wee heare of warres and rumours of warres, no more then at the rumours of any other calamity.

Here is comfort for you against the Plague, which is here and there scattered in the kingdome. What is any disease to the body, if Christ be with thy soule? As the outward man decayeth, the inward man shall bee renewed daily, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is full of pain, thy soule shall be full of comfort, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is sealed with

ſpots of death, thy ſoul ſhall bee ſealed with the holy Ghoſt unto eternall life, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. The plague of the body is nothing, if this plague of plagues be not upon the ſpirit, to wit, deſtitute of Chriſt.

Here is comfort for you againſt perſecution. When men frowne upon thee without, Chriſt will ſmile upon thy ſpirit within; when men lade the outward man with reproaches, Chriſt will fill thy inward man with comforts: when men ſhut up thy body from the communion of Saints, Chriſt will give thy ſpirit a large freedome of communion with himſelfe. When men ſtrike thy body, Chriſt will ſtroke thy ſoule: when men kill thy body, Chriſt will ſave thy ſoule. In a word, as the afflictions of Chriſt abound in thy body, ſo the conſolations of Chriſt ſhall abound in thy ſoule, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. Name any miſery that is incident to man, and her's comfort to be ſuckt out of of this point, to oppoſe unto it. Finally in life, in death and eternally after death, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit will bee gaine unto thee. Thy life hee will make comfortable; thy death hopefull; thy being after death eternally joyfull. Wherefore I will conculde my Sermon for the good of you, as Saint *Paul* doth his Epiſtle for the good of *Timothy*, *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be your ſpirits.*

Trinuni Deo gloria.

FINIS.